

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

**No. 1 Federer makes Agassi look 'ordinary'**

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Kenny Chesney

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2005

# Accident in Iraq kills five 1st ID soldiers

Two others injured after Bradley rolls into canal Page 3



**'The Aviator' flies above Oscar contenders with 11 nominations**

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Top left: Leonardo DiCaprio stars in "The Aviator." MIRAMAX FILMS/AP

Top right: Jamie Foxx portrays Ray Charles in the biographical film "Ray." UNIVERSAL STUDIOS/AP

Above: The cast of "Sideways" — from left, Sandra Oh, Thomas Haden Church, Virginia Madsen and Paul Giamatti — has a picnic. TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX/AP

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PETER PHOTIOE/Stars and Stripes

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## NewsTracker ... What's new with old news

### States

**O.J. Simpson assets:** A memorabilia collector has refused to hand over O.J. Simpson's press credentials from the 1984 Olympics, ignoring a judge's order to satisfy a \$33.5 million award in a lawsuit that found Simpson liable for the deaths of his ex-wife and her friend.

The order was issued in November to Alfred Beardsley after a closed-door court hearing to determine whether Simpson was hiding assets from the family of Ron Goldman, who was slain with Nicole Brown Simpson in 1994. Beardsley said attorneys for the Goldman family had given him until Monday to turn over the credentials, which he now believes were stolen from Simpson, along with other items the former football star kept in storage after he moved to Florida.

**Robert Blake trial:** A former assistant testifying in Robert Blake's murder trial told jurors she unwittingly helped the actor kidnap his daughter and feared immediately afterward that he had "done away" with the baby's mother.

Despite those fears, Cody Blackwell said she never went to police. Instead, she sold her story to a tabloid publication for \$8,000 after learning of Bonny Lee Bakley's slaying.

"I was scared," Blackwell testified Monday. "I thought, 'Oh my God, I've been involved in a kidnapping of which I wasn't aware.'"

Bakley reported the baby's abduction to police before she married Blake. She was shot to death in May 2001.

The 71-year-old star of the "Baretta" TV series is charged with killing Bakley, whom he married after discovering he had fathered her child. The prosecution alleges he wanted to keep the baby, Rosie, from Bakley, who had a criminal record and was on probation.

**Fresno murders:** Attorneys say they could spend as much as a month screening potential jurors in a trial of a man charged with the shootings deaths of nine of his children.

About 2,200 potential jurors have been summoned to appear in Fresno County Superior Court in California for the start of jury selection in the trial of Marcus Wesson, the only one to emerge alive March 12, 2004, from a house where police discovered nine bodies in a bloody tangle and 10 white coffins stacked against the living room walls.

Each victim had been shot once in the eye — the youngest a 1-year-old toddler, the oldest a 25-year-old woman whose child was among the dead.

Wesson faces nine murder charges, and more than a dozen counts of sexual abuse.

**Videotaping arrest:** A Pakistani man taken into custody after a police officer saw him videotaping downtown skyscrapers was sentenced to six months in prison on several charges — none related to terrorist activities.

Kamran Akhtar, 36, was sentenced Monday for five immigration charges, including failure to follow a court order to leave the United States, possessing false identification cards and making false statements to investigators. After he was arrested in July, investigators found videotape in his camera showing the 60-story Bank of America tower and the skyscraper that houses the



Blake



**Grocery strikes:** Grocery workers Laurie Piazza, left, and Elise Blazek speak about a new contract that United Food and Commercial Workers Local 428 Bay Area Coalition and three major grocers — Safeway, Albertsons and Kroger — tentatively agreed to Monday. The supermarkets say they must lower their labor costs to fend off tougher competition from discount merchants, such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Target Inc., that have been expanding their grocery selection. Labor leaders maintained that the grocers are exaggerating the Wal-Mart threat to squeeze out more profits at the expense of store workers.

Charlotte office of the FBI. Other states showed buildings and landmarks elsewhere in the United States, authorities said.

ister Vuk Draskovic.

### World

**DMZ accusations:** North Korea on Tuesday accused South Korea of illegally deploying "an artillery piece" inside the Demilitarized Zone separating the two Koreas.

North Korea periodically makes such accusations, and South Korean officials dismiss the allegations as propaganda.

Under a cease-fire accord, only rifles and other small arms are allowed inside the DMZ, which was created after the 1950-53 Korean War as a buffer between the two states.

**Hamas cease-fire offer:** The top Hamas leader said his militant group is prepared to suspend attacks if Israel stops targeting militants and agrees to release thousands of Palestinian prisoners, according to an interview published Tuesday.

The apparent softening of Hamas' position raised hopes that Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas would soon reach a formal cease-fire with militant groups that would pave the way for a new round of peace talks with Israel.

**Kuwait terrorism:** Kuwaiti police have referred six suspected militants to prosecutors, believing they should be charged with either planning terrorist attacks or failing to report their knowledge of such plans, an Interior Ministry official said Tuesday.

The suspects are among 25 men detained after shootouts with Kuwaiti police on Jan. 10 and 15. Two police officers and two terrorist suspects were killed in the clashes. Police seized large amounts of explosives and weapons after the shootouts.

**Serb war criminals:** The European Union's enlargement chief warned Belgrade leaders Tuesday that Serbia-Montenegro's chances for EU membership hinged on its handling over Serb war crimes suspects to the U.N. court at The Hague, Netherlands.

"It is up to you to meet the critical condition, cooperation with The Hague tribunal," Olli Rehn said after talks with Foreign Min-

**Tsunami aftermath:** Fire raged in this tsunami-battered city Tuesday, when gas cylinders strewn across a debris-strewn area began exploding.

No injuries were reported as the blaze approached a power generator, raising fears that gas and oil inside might explode.

Firefighters said they were running out of water. In one area, debris blocked three fire trucks from getting closer than 200 yards to the flames and firefighters dragged dry wood away from the blaze to prevent it from spreading.

### Business

**CEO accounting fraud:** Prosecutors claim former HealthSouth CEO Richard Scrushy and other top executives schemed to inflate company profits by more than \$2.6 billion to make it appear the rehabilitation giant was meeting Wall Street forecasts.

Although Scrushy's defense in the corporate fraud trial says he is not contesting the existence of such a scheme, "he was unaware of it and was not a knowing participant."

The government is seeking \$278 million in personal assets, including waterfront homes, luxury cars and a yacht.

Scrushy, 52, has pleaded not guilty to a 58-count indictment that includes charges of fraud, conspiracy, obstruction of justice, perjury, money laundering and false corporate reporting in the first test of the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

### War on terrorism

**Guantanamo releases:** Four Britons were released from the U.S. military camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and put on a flight that will arrive in Britain on Tuesday, police said.

Mouazzam Beggs, Ferroz Abbasi, Martin Mubanga and Richard Belmar were among some 550 prisoners from 42 countries swept up in the U.S.-led war on terrorism and detained without charge for up to three years. Guantanamo holds detainees that U.S. authorities said were suspected of having links to the al-Qaida terrorist network or Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

# 5 U.S. soldiers killed in Bradley accident

The Associated Press

TIKRIT, Iraq — A Bradley fighting vehicle rolled into a canal during a combat patrol north of Baghdad, killing five U.S. soldiers and wounding two others, the military said Tuesday.

The soldiers from the Army's 1st Infantry Division were pronounced dead on arrival at a military medical clinic.

Capt. Bill Coppemoll, 1st ID spokesman in Iraq, confirmed the soldiers were from a Germany-based unit.

Major Neal O'Brien, another 1st ID spokesman, said the soldiers were with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

Officials declined to identify them any further citing next-of-kin notification rules.

"We prefer we keep these things at division level, and let DOD make the specific announcement," O'Brien said. "The families prefer that."

One of the two injured soldiers was in serious condition, the other was stable, a military statement said.

The M2 Bradley rolled into a canal during the patrol near the town of Khan Bani Saad on Monday night.

The military was investigating the cause of the accident.

Stars and Stripes reporter Rick Emert contributed to this report.



A U.S. soldier carries a painting as he walks to a helicopter in the International Zone of Baghdad on Tuesday. According to British ambassador to Iraq, Edward Chaplin, the Iraqi people are determined to turn out and vote in the national elections scheduled for Jan. 30, despite a campaign of intimidation by insurgents.

AP

## U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Monday, at least 1,372 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,077 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is four higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Monday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,234 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 968 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ Army Sgt. Kyle W. Childress, 29, Terre Haute, Ind.; died Friday in Balad, Iraq, of wounds received when his unit was attacked; assigned to the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, Schweinfurt, Germany.

■ Army Capt. Joe F. Lusk II, 25, Reedley, Calif.; died Friday in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, of noncombat injuries; assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Fort Bragg, N.C.

■ Army 1st Lt. Nainoa K. Hoe, 27, Kailua, Hawaii; killed Saturday by small arms fire in Mosul, Iraq; assigned to the Army's 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.

## Pre-vote attacks kill 9 Iraqis

BY SAMEER N. YACUB

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A spate of slayings and fierce clashes between insurgents and Iraqi police left at least nine Iraqis dead in Baghdad on Tuesday, including a senior Iraqi judge, highlighting the grave security risks in the run-up to this weekend's elections.

Amid the violence, interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said the time was not right to talk of a U.S. troop withdrawal and that Iraq must first build up its security forces to confront the insurgents.

"Others spoke about the immediate withdrawal or setting a timetable for the withdrawal of multinational forces," Allawi told reporters on Tuesday. "I will not deal with the security matter under political pretexts and exaggerations that do not serve Iraq and its people."

"I will not set final dates" for the withdrawal of international forces "because setting final dates will be futile and dangerous," Allawi said.

Fighting erupted Tuesday in Baghdad's eastern Kasbah neighborhood as Iraqi police fired on insurgents who were handing out leaflets warning people not to vote in Sunday's national elections.

About the same time and in the same neighborhood, insurgents opened fire on police who were checking out a report of a possible car bomb.

Another bomb blew off the gate of a secondary school in the neighborhood and gunmen opened fire on Iraqi and U.S. forces responding to the blast.

Altogether, three policemen were killed and nine were wounded in the various clashes, according to an official at Kindi Hospital.

Two insurgents died and a shopkeeper was also killed in the crossfire. Earlier, officials reported 11 policemen were killed and offered no explanation for the revised death toll.

Elsewhere, gunmen killed two Iraqi army soldiers on patrol west of Baghdad, witnesses said.

## Video shows U.S. hostage appealing to Arab leaders

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A videotape monitored Tuesday shows an American abducted last November by gunmen in Baghdad pleading for his life and appealing to Arab rulers, including Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, to intercede to spare his life.

In the video, hostage Roy Hallums spoke slowly, rubbing his hands as he sat with a rifle pointed at his head. He said he had been arrested by a "resistance group" because "I have worked with American forces."

Hallums, 56, was seized Nov. 1 along with Filipino Robert Tarangoy during an armed assault on their compound in Baghdad's Mansour district. The two were working for a Saudi company that does catering for the Iraqi army. Both are missing. The video showed nothing of the Filipino. "I am please asking for help because my life is in danger because



Hallums

it's been proved I worked for American forces," Hallums said. "I'm not asking for any help from President Bush because I know of his selfishness and concern for those who've been pushed into this hellhole."

Hallums said he was asking for help from "Arab rulers especially President Moammar Gadhafi because he's known for helping those who are suffering."

"I also ask that Arab leaders help me in this situation so I can be released as quickly as possible from this definite end," he added. "I would remember this favor for the rest of my life should my life remain and I ask my family to help because my health is in a very bad situation."

Officials have warned of a surge in violence around Sunday's national elections, which insurgents have vowed to disrupt.

The slain judge was identified as Qais Hashim Shameri, secretary-general of the judges council in the Justice Ministry. Assassins sprayed his car with bullets in an attack that also killed the judge's driver and wounded his bodyguard.

The Ansar al-Sunnah Army, one of Iraq's most active insurgent groups, claimed responsibility for the slaying, and in a Web posting called the judge "one of the heads of infidelity and apostasy of the new Iraqi government."

Assailants also shot dead a man who

worked for a district council in western Baghdad as he was on his way to work, police said.

In a third ambush, gunmen firing from a speeding car wounded three staffers from the Communications Ministry as they were going to work, police Lt. Iyman Abdul-Hamid said. The three workers, one of them a woman with serious injuries, were rushed to a hospital.

In Iraq's north, gunmen kidnapped a senior official in the Iraqi Communist Party, Mohammed Nouri Aghawi, in the city of Mosul, a party official said. Attackers blasted a school to be used as a polling station with machine gun fire in the central city of Diwiyah, but no one was injured, a Polish military spokesman said Tuesday.

# Gunbattle erupts during afternoon patrol in Ramadi

## While passing out election info, U.S., Iraqi forces come under fire

BY JOSEPH GIORDONO  
Stars and Stripes

RAMADI, Iraq — A joint patrol of American and Iraqi troops skirmished Monday with insurgents in downtown Ramadi, underscoring efforts to provide election security in the capital of Anbar province.

Soldiers from Company D, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment — conducting a cordon-and-search operation with a platoon of Iraqi Special Police commandos — traded fire with insurgents.

For the better part of an hour, gunshots and loud explosions echoed through the streets as both sides ducked into alleyways and courtyards amid the exchange. Orange-tinted skies from a brief sandstorm and competing calls to prayer from local mosques added to the eerie scene. Neither U.S. nor Iraqi units reported any casualties.

Similar clashes, which U.S. soldiers say waned in the weeks after the November assault on Fallujah, have increased in Ramadi as the Jan. 30 national election approaches. Just days before Iraqi voters are to select an assembly to write a new constitution, residents in Ramadi say they are still worried about insurgent attacks.

When the patrol arrived just before noon, it was immediately apparent that Ramadi is unlike other towns in the area. As soldiers began their mission, every-

one on the streets went into their homes. Shopkeepers closed up their businesses and none of the crowds of children that usually follow U.S. soldiers in other towns came out.

"That's pretty normal for this part of town," said 1st Lt. Larry Chappell, an Arabic speaker who directed the Iraqi platoon.

"There are signs on the walls saying if we go to vote, we will all be killed," one woman told a group of U.S. psychological operations soldiers who accompanied the patrol.

"If you all go to vote, there is nothing they can do to you," one of the soldiers replied. "They are trying to scare you. Coalition and Iraqi forces will be protecting the polls."

In another courtyard, 1st Lt. Baudelio Arias, a 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery member attached to Company D as a civil affairs officer, handed out election information and pieces of candy to children.

As the troops swept through several blocks of a residential area in Ramadi, the Iraqi soldiers took the lead in entering the houses and talking with the residents. Most of the local men were not at home; many families said the men were at work or on the hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Iraqi soldiers talked with residents who were home, handing out election information flyers.

U.S. officials in the short term



PHOTOS BY JOSEPH GIORDONO/Stars and Stripes

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Larry Chappell, left, and Pfc. Sean Mullins, both of Company D, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry, peer out from a gated courtyard during a cordon-and-search operation Monday in Ramadi, Iraq.

are counting on Iraqi forces to provide security at polling places. In the long run, officials hope, a reconstituted Iraqi security force will allow the 150,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq to return home.

During Monday's patrol, the soldiers faced many of the same problems they have encountered before. Few of the local residents — who almost unanimously expressed a strong desire to vote — offered information on insurgents in the area.

"This is a safe neighborhood," one older resident, who said he has lived in the same house since 1960, told the soldiers in one of the first houses they visited.

Unknowingly foreshadowing the firefight ahead, a U.S. soldier replied to the man in disbelief.

"There has not been a day when we come to this street and don't take contact from insurgents," he told the man. "So please explain to me how you consider this a safe neighborhood, or at least, how you can think it's free of insurgents?"

E-mail Joseph Giordono at: giordono@starsandstripes.osd.mil



First Lt. Baudelio Arias, 30, from Santa Monica, Calif., hands out candy to Iraqi children.



Above: Mullins, a radio operator with Company D, relays messages during a firefight with insurgents. Right: A soldier from Company D takes aim from behind a pile of rubble.



An Iraqi Special Police commando, left, and Chappell keep security on a Ramadi street corner Monday.



# Army's troop level in Iraq to stay through '06

## Top operations officer expects little change in numbers during the next two years

BY BRADLEY GRAHAM

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Army expects to keep its troop strength in Iraq at the current level of about 120,000 for at least two more years, according to the Army's top operations officer.

While allowing for the possibility that the levels could decrease or increase depending on security conditions and other factors, Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace Jr. told reporters Monday that the assumption of little change through 2006 represents "the most probable case."

Recent disclosures that the Pentagon plans to beef up training of Iraqi security forces and press them into action more quickly has fueled speculation that the Bush administration could be preparing to reduce the number of U.S. troops significantly this year. As more Iraqi troops join the fight, the thinking goes, U.S. troops could begin to withdraw.

But Lovelace's remarks indicated that the Army is not yet contemplating such a move. Indeed, the general said, the Army expects to continue rotating active-duty units in and out of Iraq in year-long deployments and is looking for ways to dip even deep-



Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry search a building Monday in Mosul, Iraq. Pentagon plans to beef up training of Iraqi security forces has fueled speculation that the Bush administration could reduce the number of U.S. troops in Iraq this year, but the Army's chief operations officer says that may not be the case.

er into reserve forces — even as leaders of the reserves have warned that the Pentagon could be running out of such units.

"We're making the assumption

that the level of effort is going to continue," Lovelace said.

Lovelace, who assumed his post of deputy chief of staff for operations in October, spoke to a

group of Pentagon reporters in what had been billed as an informal "meet and greet" session. The conversation quickly focused on the Army's planning for Iraq.

The number of U.S. Army and other forces in Iraq rose to 150,000 last month in what Pentagon officials described as an effort to bolster security ahead of Iraqi elections this weekend.

Lovelace made it clear that the Army's assumption about future U.S. force levels was not meant to prejudice likely trends in either Iraq's security situation or development of its security services. He said the planning is intended to ensure that enough units would be ready if needed and to give U.S. troops a basis on which to organize their own lives.

"It's really about us providing the predictability to our own soldiers," he said. "It has nothing to do with the Iraqi army; it has everything to do with our own institutional ability."

Asked about the Army's assumption, Lawrence T. Di Rita, the Pentagon's main spokesman, said he was "not surprised" to hear that the Army has chosen such a number, noting the need for service leaders to do such planning. "But it's not going to be the Army's determination," he said. "Ultimately, the determination will be made by the commanders in the field."

Jonathan Weisman and Mike Allen of The Washington Post contributed to this report.

## Pentagon: Uproar over secret spy group based on wrong information

BY ROBERT BURNS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon says the political uproar over the disclosure of a secret military intelligence group is overblown and based on misinformation about the group's makeup and mission.

Stephen A. Cambone, the Pentagon's top intelligence official, rushed to Capitol Hill on Monday after some members of Congress reacted strongly to a Washington Post report that revealed the existence of the group, which is managed by the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a California Democrat, and other Democrats called for hearings, but Republicans balked.

"According to The Washington Post, the Department of Defense is changing the guidelines with respect to oversight and notification of Congress by military intelligence. Is this true or false?" Feinstein wrote in a letter to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Feinstein and others appeared puzzled by the disclosure that the Pentagon had created a new battlefield intelligence group — "strategic support teams," in Pentagon parlance — to perform clandestine missions that had been largely the province of the CIA. Some suggested Rumsfeld had

skirted congressional oversight to expand his domain.

Pentagon officials told reporters, however, that the arrangement had been worked out in close coordination with the CIA and that appropriate congressional committees had been fully informed.

A defense official said lawmakers might not recognize the news media's descriptions of the intelligence group because its name was changed after they were briefed on it last year.

Now called strategic support teams, they were previously known as human augmentation teams, the official said, speaking only on condition that he not be further identified. (Huntrefers to human intelligence, or information provided by spies.)

The teams — each with about 10 mostly civilian linguists, case officers, interrogators and debriefers — are designed to provide the military's conventional and special operations forces with more sustainable battlefield intelligence to support combat and other activities.

The defense officials said this is not a new mission for military intelligence; rather, they said, it is being structured in a new way so that it can be provided to battlefield commanders in a more standardized manner. It previously had been done in a more ad hoc way, they said.

## More abuse complaints revealed

BY JOHN HENDREN

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Pentagon documents released Monday disclosed that Iraqi prisoners had lodged dozens of abuse complaints against U.S. and Iraqi personnel who guarded them at a little-known palace in Baghdad converted to a U.S. prison. Among the allegations were that guards had sodomized a disabled man and killed his brother, whose dying body was tossed into a cell, atop his sister.

The documents, obtained in a lawsuit against the federal government by the American Civil Liberties Union, suggest for the first time that numerous detainees were abused at Adhamiya Palace, one of Saddam Hussein's villas in eastern Baghdad that was used by his son Qadhi.

Previous cases of abuse of Iraqi prisoners have focused mainly on Abu Ghraib prison.

A government contractor interviewed by U.S. investigators said as many as 90 incidents of possible abuse took place at the palace, but only a few were detailed in hundreds of pages of documents released Monday.

The documents also touch on alleged abuses in other U.S.-run lockups in Iraq.

The latest allegations, human rights activists said, suggested systematic abuse of prisoners at U.S. military detention facilities across the globe. ACLU officials, who have obtained and released thousands of documents in recent months, on Monday accused the

## Report: Iraqi security forces arbitrarily arresting people

The Associated Press

LONDON — Iraqi security forces are arbitrarily arresting people and systematically torturing and abusing detainees, Human Rights Watch said in a report released Tuesday.

Iraq's interim government said it has begun an investigation into charges of abuse and torture.

With few exceptions, Iraqi authorities have not acted to stop such mistreatment, the human rights report said. International police advisers, largely funded by the U.S. government, "have turned a blind eye to these rampant abuses," it said.

The Iraqi interim government led by Prime Minister Ayad Alawi — appears to be actively taking part, or is at least complicit, in these grave violations of fundamental human rights. Nor has the United States, the United Kingdom or other involved governments publicly taken up these issues as a matter of concern," the report said.

Human Rights Watch said it interviewed 90 detainees in Iraq, of whom 72 claimed to have been tortured or abused.

"Typically, detainees reported being blindfolded with their hands tied behind their back while undergoing intense interrogation. They said their interrogators or guards kicked, slapped and punched them, and beat them all over the body using hoses, wooden sticks, iron rods and cables," the report said.

Pentagon of a "wofefully inadequate" response to hundreds of incidents of alleged abuse.

"The documents that the ACLU has obtained tell a damning story of widespread torture reaching well beyond the walls of Abu Ghraib," said the group's director, Anthony D. Romero.

Responding to the latest allegations, U.S. military officials maintained that a few low-level troops had committed the abuses, independent of senior commanders.

Adhamiya Palace is a prison

overseen by the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division, with interrogations conducted at least in part by members of the 5th Special Forces Group of Fort Campbell, Ky.

The abuse alleged at the palace included forced sodomy, electric shocks, cigarette burns and severe beatings. Some allegations by prisoners were corroborated by U.S. civilian military contractors hired by the military to help interrogate detainees, according to the Pentagon documents.

Ether Schrader of the Los Angeles Times contributed to this report.

# DOD adds post-combat counseling session

## Health assessment set for 3 to 5 months later to treat problems like long-term trauma

By LEO SHANE III

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Troops returning from combat will undergo two mental health assessments — one right away, one three to five months later — to make sure they aren't suffering long-term trauma, Defense Department officials announced this week.

Servicemembers are already required to talk to counselors immediately before and after their deployment. But Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said often problems like post-traumatic stress disorder take weeks or months to manifest themselves.

"There is a minority percentage who have these issues, and we've also learned there is a concern or stigma about coming in for this," he said. "One of the ways we think we can get at that is to require this to every body."

"It's really not meant to be a probing, intrusive kind of thing. It's meant to be a

'How are you doing? How is your family doing? If you're having problems, we want to help.'"

Winkenwerder said having counselors re-examine everyone months after their return will identify more problems, which in turn will allow them to help more troops. Officials will also redesign the current pre- and postcombat interviews to include a stronger mental health focus.

"Many times just talking helps people deal with these issues," he said. "Some people might be having symptoms and thinking, 'Am I crazy?' and they need to be told, 'No, you're having a psychological reaction to this stressful event.'"

The new program will begin sometime this spring, Winkenwerder said no cost estimates have been calculated for that redesign or the extra counseling.

Meanwhile, officials are wrestling with how to ensure everyone gets the new assessments, particularly Individual Ready Reservists, who don't belong a specific unit once they're demobilized, said Col. Thomas Burke, one of the Pentagon's top psy-

chiatrists and the director of mental health policy for the Defense Department.

Also problematic, he said, are active-duty troops who move to new units or leave the Army after they return from the combat zone.

The services have already been augmenting active-duty mental health providers with contractors, but officials know more help will likely be needed — both in the military clinics as well as at Veterans Administration hospitals, said Burke.

"Do we have enough doctors and facilities for what will be needed five years from now? I suspect not."

Burke said, however, it's too early to tell if the military medical system will be overloaded without a significant increase in providers.

While officials are paying close attention to the trends, he added, "we don't know how long the war will last or how many troops will be involved."

For now, Burke said, "we have enough psychiatrists, but they are all very busy."

Winkenwerder said for now, troops who

have already returned from deployment will not be included in the extra interviews. Family members also will not be included in the assessments.

But the department does plan to create hot lines for troops or family members to call for assistance and counseling, anonymously if they prefer.

Winkenwerder said the department estimates between 8 and 15 percent of combat veterans suffer some lasting mental health trauma from their experience. Information from the interviews will be kept in a confidential database, so officials can use what they learn to help other veterans in the future.

Department officials also announced this week a \$13 million initiative to decrease smoking, binge drinking and obesity among servicemembers. The campaign will include online education programs and was launched after a 2002 study showed increases in those three areas among all of the services.

Stripes reporter Jon Anderson contributed to this report from the Pentagon.

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# USS Emory S. Land heads for W. Africa mission

## Ship's tour planned to help nations boost maritime security and forge stronger alliances

By SCOTT SCHONAUER

Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain — Sailors and Marines aboard the sub tender USS Emory S. Land are heading to the Gulf of Guinea to help African nations boost maritime security and forge stronger alliances.

The 646-foot ship left Rota on Tuesday and will visit Cameroon, Nigeria, Togo, Gabon and Ghana before returning to its home port in La Maddalena, Sardinia, sometime in March.

About 1,400 sailors and Marines are making the deployment.

"This is a working trip," said Marine Col. Barry Cronin, commander of Task Group 60.5 and leader of the mission. "This is not a pleasure cruise. We're going to go down and we're going to work and help these folks. The big thing is to develop the regional approach to maritime security."

Those aboard the ship include members of the Rota-based Marine Corps Security Force Company Europe, who will interact with their African counterparts on how to better protect shipping channels and guard ships.

A group of Navy construction workers, better known as Seabees, will help fix navy vessels and do some community relations projects.

In addition, sailors and officers from some of the West African countries will be riding aboard the Emory S. Land — which was originally designed to service Los Angeles-class submarines.

"Coastal security in West Africa, for example, is done probably differently by each of the countries that are here," Navy Lt. Cmdr. Dan Trot, the ship's operations officer. "So, we can talk with them and share some ideas on ways to use the few resources that are available in that region."

The mission to the region will include performing some humanitarian aid, the exchange of security and anti-terrorism techniques, HIV-AIDS prevention and awareness exercises and search-and-rescue training.



SCOTT SCHONAUER/Stars and Stripes

The USS Emory S. Land is moored at Naval Station Rota, Spain's pier on Monday. The submarine tender is en route to the Gulf of Guinea to train with African military units and foster greater relations with countries in the region.

The Gulf of Guinea, which is on the southwest coast of Africa, is an oil-rich region, and the Bush administration has tried to partner with the developing coastal countries in the area.

The idea of bringing the sub tender to the area sprang from a conference in Naples, Italy, last year.

In October, naval leaders from 17 na-

tions met at the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Conference to discuss ways their forces could improve cooperation and security to prevent such threats as smuggling, piracy and drug and weapon trafficking.

For American sailors and Marines, the deployment is a chance to see a part of the world many Americans have not seen.

Petty Officer 2nd Class David Drake

will be making the trip to the Gulf of Guinea aboard the ship and is excited about the chance to learn more about the West African culture.

"The main reason I joined the Navy is to see the world," he said. "And this is a chance to see a part I haven't seen."

E-mail Scott Schonauer at: schonauers@mail.stripes.osd.mil

# Vilseck community honors Pfc. Becker

## 19-year-old was first 2-63 Armor soldier to die in Iraq

By RICK EMERT

Stars and Stripes

The military community in Vilseck, Germany, bid farewell last week to the first 2nd Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment soldier to die after nearly a year in Iraq.

Pfc. Gunnar D. Becker, 19, of Forestburg, S.D., died Jan. 13 in Mosul when a 50-caliber machine gun round was accidentally discharged, ricocheted and struck him, according to an Army news release.

In remarks at a Jan. 15 memorial service in Mosul, the battalion's command sergeant major pondered what the platoon was going through after coming so close to bringing home every soldier.

"I just can't imagine their pain," Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Bartoszek was quoted as saying in the release. "They could see the finish line. It's so difficult to lose a soldier like this."

The young tank driver joined the Army in August 2003. His assignment to 2-63 Armor was his first.

In remarks at a memorial service Thursday at the unit's home in Vilseck, Becker was remembered for his sense of humor and for lifting the spirits of his fellow soldiers.

"Those who knew him were intimately familiar with and couldn't resist Gunnar's positive attitude, good-natured spirit and perennial lightheartedness," said Capt. Justin Shell, 2-63 Armor rear de-

tachment commander. "He was the guy with a smile on his face that could bring levity to any situation and is the one his peers looked to, to break the monotony that is inherent to all deployments."

However, when it came to the mission, Becker was serious.

"Pfc. Becker liked to joke around in his off time, but while on patrol, he was all business," Shell said. "He was a dedicated, dependable professional that his teammates could rely on in any situation. He was both a skilled tank and (Humvee) driver and ... his platoon's unofficial mechanic."

Becker put the needs of his fellow soldiers before his own, according to Shell.

"Gunnar was the 19-year-old soldier who, of his own volition and without coercion, relinquished his [rest and recuperation] slot so that a fellow soldier could return stateside to his ailing grandfather," he said. "God reclaimed Pfc. Gunnar Becker from this earth almost 20 years after he had been born. Undoubtedly, Gunnar meaningfully touched more lives in his 19 years than the average man does in a lifetime."

The Vilseck community observed a moment of silence at 10:30 p.m. Saturday, which would have been Becker's 20th birthday.

Becker is survived by his parents, Deborah and Duane, and sister, DiJo.

E-mail Rick Emert at: [emert@mail.strips.osd.mil](mailto:emert@mail.strips.osd.mil)



Courtesy of U.S. Army

Pfc. Gunnar D. Becker,  
2nd Battalion, 63rd Armor  
Regiment, Vilseck, Germany



KIMBERLY SNOW/Courtesy of U.S. Army

Company B 1st Sgt. Rodney F. McClinton says a final goodbye to one of his soldiers, Pfc. Gunnar D. Becker of Forestburg, S.D., who died in Iraq Jan. 13. Becker was a tank driver with Company B's second platoon.

Message for our men and women in uniform...

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# Military reveals Gitmo mass hanging attempt

## Officials say detainees sought attention, not death in '03 protest

BY PAISLEY DODDS  
The Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — The U.S. military said 23 Guantanamo Bay terror suspects carried out a coordinated effort to hang or strangle themselves in 2003 during a week-long protest in the secretive camp in Cuba.

The military, which had not previously reported the protest, called the actions "self-injurious behavior" aimed at getting attention rather than serious suicide attempts.

The coordinated attempts were among 350 "self-harm" incidents that year, including 120 so-called "hanging gestures," Lt. Col. Leon Sumpter, a spokesman for the detention mission, said Monday.

In the Aug. 18-26, 2003, protest, nearly two dozen prisoners tried to hang or strangle themselves with clothing and other items in their cells, demonstrating "self-injurious behavior," the U.S. Southern Command in Miami said in a statement. Ten detainees made a mass attempt on Aug. 22 alone.

Last year, there were 110 self-harm incidents, Sumpter said.

The 23 prisoners were in steel mesh cells and they can talk to neighbors. It would not have been possible to pass notes,

and they are allowed to exercise only one at a time.

Only two of the 23 were considered suicide attempts — requiring hospitalization and psychiatric treatment. Officials said they differentiated between a suicide attempt in which a detainee could have died without intervention, and a "gesture" aimed at getting attention.

Sixteen of the 23 remain at Guantanamo; seven have been transferred to other countries.

The military has reported 34 suicide attempts since the camp opened in January 2002, including one prisoner who went into a coma and sustained memory loss from brain damage.

The 2003 protests came as the camp suffered a rash of suicide attempts after Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller took command with a mandate to get more information from prisoners accused of links to al-Qaida or Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime, which had sheltered Osama bin Laden.

Critics linked the two and criticized the delay in reporting the incidents.

"When you have suicide attempts or so-called self-harm incidents, it shows the type of impact indefinite detention can have, but it also points to the extreme measures the Pentagon is taking to cover up

things that have happened in Guantanamo," said Alistair Hodggett, a spokesman for Amnesty International in Washington, D.C.

"What we've seen is that it wasn't simply a rotation of forces [guards] but an attempt to toughen up the interrogation techniques and processes," he added.

Dr. Daryl Matthews, a forensic psychiatrist at the University of Hawaii, said he believed he was misled during a visit to Guantanamo in June 2003 to investigate and make recommendations about detainees' mental health care, at the request of the Army surgeon general.

"There were many things I wanted to see that I was precluded from seeing, particularly with the interrogation issues," Matthews told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "In no way did I get honest or accurate information. I feel like I was being systematically misled."

He criticized some practices, and said it was "appalling" that medical professionals shared detainees' medical records with interrogators.

Some 538 prisoners are at Guantanamo Bay, many held for more than three years without charge or access to attorneys.

Army Gen. Jay Hood, who succeeded Miller last year, has said the number of incidents has decreased since 2003, when the military set up a psychiatric ward.



COURTESY OF THE U.S. NAVY/AP

**Suspected Taliban and al-Qaida detainees sit in a holding area at Camp X-Ray at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during in-processing in January 2002. The military reported Monday that 23 detainees attempted to hang themselves in a mass protest in 2003.**

## Chinese hostages on their way home

The Associated Press

Eight Chinese construction workers freed by insurgents in Iraq left for home Tuesday following a delay in their departure from Baghdad, state media reported.

A Chinese Embassy official in Jordan said Tuesday the eight arrived in Amman aboard a commercial flight from Baghdad earlier in the day. They were likely to fly to China later Tuesday, the official said on condition of anonymity.

The workers had been scheduled to fly to Amman on Monday but the flight had been turned back because of fighting near Baghdad's airport. Ministry



XINHA/AP

**Four of the eight released Chinese nationals who had been held hostage in Iraq by members of the Iraqi Insurgent Movement head to Baghdad Airport for China on Tuesday.**

spokesman Kong Quan had said earlier Tuesday that the return of the eight was delayed by "technical problems." He did not mention the fighting.

The men were seized this month by the Islamic Resistance Movement as they tried to leave Iraq for neighboring Jordan. Their captors said the men had worked at American sites in Iraq.

Kong said the workers went to Iraq on their own and were seized while on their way back to China.

Kong said no ransom was paid, but he didn't give any details of negotiations.

In a videotape shown Saturday, the insurgents said they decided to release the hostages after China pledged to discourage its citizens from traveling to Iraq.

## GI convicted in theft seeks return to duty

BY JAMES HANNAH  
The Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio — A former Ohio Army Reserve commander court-martialed for taking Army vehicles in Kuwait so his unit could carry out its mission in Iraq said she is returning to duty pending her bid for clemency.

Maj. Cathy Kaus, 47, of Dayton, said she plans to report for duty Tuesday at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Kaus said she is not sure what tasks she will be assigned.

"I'm very anxious to get down there and prove to them that I do have some qualities the Army needs," Kaus said Monday.

"I look at it as starting a new job."

Kaus, a 27-year veteran of the reserves, served six months in a

Naval brig after being convicted of theft, abandoning military property, conspiring to abandon military property and neglecting duty.

Her attorney, Philip Cave, said that while the court dismissed Kaus from the military — an officer's version of a dishonorable discharge — the dismissal is not final until the clemency and appeals process is complete.

Kaus was among six reservists from the Springfield, Ohio-based 656th Transportation Company who were court-martialed at a time when some U.S. troops in Iraq were complaining they had to scrounge for equipment and armor for their vehicles.

Members of the unit said they needed the equipment to deliver fuel to U.S. forces in Iraq.

## Iraqi oil minister to skip OPEC session

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Oil Minister Thamir Ghadhafi will not attend this month's OPEC meeting because of the coming elections and fuel crisis the country is facing, the Iraqi government said Tuesday.

The announcement came five days before the ministers of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries were to meet in Vienna.

The statement said the oil ministry as well as other ministries will contribute to making Sunday's

elections a success. Iraqis will choose a 275-member National Assembly and provincial councils in the 18 provinces.

Iraq has been enduring fuel shortages for weeks. Officials blame the shortage on insurgent attacks on pipelines, ambushes of fuel convoys, a flourishing black market and crumbling infrastructure in Iraq's petroleum industry.

The statement said the Oil Ministry signed a contract with Turkish companies to supply Iraq with 6,000 tons of oil products as well as an agreement with Kuwait to increase shipments of gasoline, kerosene and liquefied gas.

## Italy mourns death of soldier killed in Iraq

Flags flew at half-staff Tuesday at U.S. military bases in Italy in honor of an Italian soldier killed Friday in Iraq.

Top Italian officials attended a state funeral in the city of Ferenatino, about 43 miles south of Rome, to pay their respects to Sgt. Simone Cola. He was killed Friday by a burst of gunfire while aboard a helicopter patrolling the southern city of Nasiriyah.

There are about 3,000 Italian troops in Iraq. Cola was the 20th Italian soldier to be killed there, and his death has sparked a debate over whether Italian troops should have better armored equipment.

From staff reports



# Iraqi radio station promoting vote with unusual zeal

BY AAMER MADHANI  
Chicago Tribune

NEAR BUHRIZ, Iraq — For someone who recently was threatened with having his tongue cut out for encouraging people to vote, Rafiq Mahmoud Sayed has surprisingly little sympathy for those who say they fear going to the polls Jan. 30.

On a recent special edition of his radio show, Sayed intently listened patiently to a caller who talked about his desire to vote but feared a suicide bomber might attack the polling station. After a few minutes of the caller speaking about his waste of time, it would be to die on his way to the ballot box, Sayed interrupted and upbraided the caller.

"Be sure, this election is about the security situation in Iraq," said Sayed, who named his show "Good Morning, Orange City" after the restive city of Baghdad, the orange-growing capital of Iraq. "If you go vote, you can be sure the security situation will be improved. If you don't go vote, you can expect nothing."

Sayed and the 70 other employees at the Diyala province's government-owned radio and television station outside Baquba have taken on the task of promoting voter participation with somewhat unexpected zeal. Until recently, most of the programming on the station was fairly simple — music, a children's show, some call-in programs and a few reporters putting together news broadcasts, relying heavily on information provided by a U.S. psychological operation's unit stationed next door to the station.

But when the voter registration process began in November, Sayed, who is also the station's general manager, decided to make election coverage the station's priority.

There have been consequences. In the past few weeks, Sayed said, several of his employees have received death threats through anonymous notes left at their homes or through neighbors. The threats have jangled nerves, but no one

has quit, he said.

"If we do not do this, who will do it for Iraq?" Sayed said. "I have received many calls from people thanking me for doing this, because no one else is doing anything like this."

About two weeks ago, Sayed said, someone came into his younger brother's tea shop in the nearby town of Mufrek to deliver a message: If Sayed didn't stop talking about the election and criticizing the insurgency, someone would come to the radio show host's house and cut out his tongue.

In a province where insurgents have assassinated eight provincial council members in the past two months and launch daily attacks against Iraqi security forces, Sayed had to take the threat seriously. Since the threat, Sayed has been sleeping at the station. He tries to slip out during the day to visit with his wife and children, and someone from his home calls him every hour through the night to make sure he is safe.

While the province has long been a danger zone for U.S. troops, Radio Diyala is frequently cited by U.S. officials as a sign that the area is ready for the election. While the television station hasn't been able to compete with the Arabic-language news giants Al Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, Radio Diyala has become popular in the province for its call-in programs that often criticize local government officials and insurgents.

U.S. troops occasionally do training seminars for the station's employees, pay local translators to write transcripts of the shows so they can monitor what is being broadcast and often try to pitch stories to the station. But the U.S. military does not control the station's content, said Sgt. 1st Class Rodd Coker of the 35th Psychological Operations Unit.

The station is owned by the Iraqi Media Network, a property of the central government in Baghdad, which in turn was set up by the Americans.



A U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry soldier guards Iraqi men detained during a weapons raid at a gas station in Mosul, Iraq, on Tuesday. Twelve men were detained, and guns and ammunition were recovered. U.S. and Iraqi officials fear a spike in bloodshed and have announced massive security measures to protect voters from possible insurgent attacks during the elections.

## American forces deploy in protect-the-vote mission

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER

The Associated Press

ISKANDARIYAH, Iraq — The U.S. military's most critical operation since the capture of Saddam Hussein is putting boot patrols on the Euphrates River, tanks on strategic routes and warplanes overhead in a mission tens of thousands of troops strong: ensuring a credible, Iraq-run national election.

The run-up to Sunday's vote is pressing every available American servicemember into action in most of Iraq — assisting an Iraqi-ordered nationwide ban on traffic from Saturday to Monday to block car bombs and other attacks on election targets; and preparing to respond to any Iraqi request for help repelling assaults or tending casualties.

The election plan puts the might of the U.S. military in a full-force back-up role. U.S. forces are funneling stepped-up training, hundreds of fixed barricades and miles of razor wire, weapons, body armor, communication systems, generators and the fuel to run them, and even water and "meals-ready-to-eat" rations to Iraqi police and troops charged with the front-line defense of polling sites.

U.S. military medical teams here will stand by on 15-minute alert, and soldiers and Marines have intensified sweeps to try to neutralize insurgents ahead of election day.

What U.S. forces won't do, the United States says: thrust themselves into a role in which Americans, not Iraqis, are seen as conducting Iraq's first post-Saddam elections, pivotal to opening the way for any cohesive Iraqi statehood, and clearing the way out for an eventual U.S. troop withdrawal.

In this tense area just south of Baghdad, that hands-off prime directive translates into a simple command, when voting opens Sunday at 7 a.m.

"Unless someone tells you otherwise, you will have no contact with the ballots," Lt. Col. Bob Durkin ordered officers of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit infantry south of Baghdad, in an election-security planning session. "They want us to have nothing to do with that, and they're right," Durkin told his officers, gathered around a wall projector in a tent chapel. "It's their elections."

Election strategy sessions among Iraqi and American forces

are taking place near daily in the so-called triangle of death, against a backdrop of attacks targeting both.

"It's important to emphasize there's probably going to be more violence leading up to the elections, we know that," Durkin said at one meeting with police chiefs of the Iskandariyah area, steering still-wobbly Iraqi security forces the morning after one of their police vehicles rolled across a trip wire here, triggering a blast that killed two of the policemen inside. Iraqi forces "must remain at their posts through the elections."

An Iraqi-ordered 8 p.m. election curfew is to go into effect across Iraq by midweek.

Otherwise, however, U.S. and Iraqi officials' election strategies and threat levels differ widely across Iraq.

The U.S. military role in some regions will be more hands-on, including ferrying election workers to the polls in some parts of the country.

The division of election duties in the so-called triangle of death is clear, however: Despite the intensity of the threat, Iraqis — not Americans — are to run the elections and guard the polling places.



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## IN THE WORLD

Kurt Julius Goldstein, a survivor of Auschwitz, wipes away tears during his speech in front of a photo showing road leading into the camp, during a commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the camp's liberation. European leaders marked the anniversary with concern that, in many places, anti-Semitism lives on.



# 'Perversion that kills'

## Commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz, leaders worry about anti-Semitism in Europe

BY GEIR MOULSON  
The Associated Press

BERLIN — German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder expressed shame Tuesday ahead of the 60th anniversary of the Auschwitz death camp's liberation, acknowledging that the Nazis had enjoyed wide support and promising Germany would always try to keep alive the memory of the Holocaust.

Across Europe, commemorations of the Red Army's Jan. 27, 1945, liberation of Auschwitz were tinged with the pain of memories and concern that, in many places, anti-Semitism lives on.

"I express my shame in the face of those who were murdered — and above all you, who survived the hell of the concentration camps," a somber Schröder told an audience at a Berlin theater that included Auschwitz survivors.

"The overwhelming majority of Germans living today bears no guilt for the Holocaust, but they do bear a special responsibility," he said.

Some 1.5 million prisoners — most of them Jews — perished in gas chambers or died of starvation and disease at Auschwitz. Overall, 6 million Jews were killed in the Nazis camps, along with several million others, including Soviet prisoners of war,

Gypsies, homosexuals and political opponents of the Nazis.

"The evil of Nazi ideology did not come from nowhere," Schröder said. "The brutalization of thought and the loss of moral inhibitions had a history; above all, Nazi ideology was desired by people and man-made."

Leaders across Europe marked the anniversary with warnings that, even now, the battle against anti-Semitism has still to be won.

Inaugurating his country's new Holocaust memorial Tuesday, French President Jacques Chirac called for renewed efforts to stop rising attacks on Jews in France.

"Anti-Semitism is not an opinion," said Chirac, who bowed before the wall inscribed with the names of 76,000 Jews sent to Nazi death camps from France. "It is a perversion. A perversion that kills."

Europe's top human rights body, the Council of Europe, flew its flags at half staff and, in Strasbourg, France, its parliamentary assembly held a minute of silence. Its secretary-general, Terry Davis, urged citizens and governments to "live up to their responsibility" to ensure that genocide in Europe never happens again.

But the chairman of the World Jewish Congress said Europe has much more to do.

While Germany "bears particular and unforgivable responsibility," Israel Singer noted that other nations, including Austria and Switzerland, have had to face up to their own World War II role.

"Shamefully, the lessons borne from this continental introspection have been forgotten so quickly, one wonders if they were ever taught widely at all," Singer said at the memorial event in Berlin. Singer called for the establishment of a Europe-wide commission to spread information about the Holocaust while survivors are still alive.

"Only those who experienced it can make it believable to others," said Nusch Plug, an Auschwitz survivor and the president of the International Auschwitz Committee.

Another former Auschwitz prisoner, Kurt Julius Goldstein, recalled being forced onto one of the Nazis' "death marches" westward as the German defeat approached, recalling that fewer than 500 prisoners in a 3,000-strong column survived.

Auschwitz "is the biggest cemetery in the whole world," Goldstein said.

"None of them has a memorial stone — the Nazis wanted them to be forgotten. We have a duty to prevent that."

parent settling of scores between rival organized-crime gangs, officials and news reports said Tuesday.

Two Chinese men and one each from Malaysia and East Timor were injured in the attack Friday, police a spokesman said from Barcelona.

### Publisher convicted of insulting pope

WARSAW, Poland — A Warsaw court convicted and fined a former communist-era government spokesman on Tuesday for insulting Polish-born Pope John Paul II in his satirical weekly.

The court ruled that Jerry Urban, 71, founder and publisher of the weekly magazine "NIP" (Polish for "no") — illegally insulted the pope when he wrote and printed a piece making fun of John Paul's age and frailty before the pontiff's visit to Poland in August 2002.

From The Associated Press

## Officials: Al-Qaida suspect on FBI list put in U.S. custody

BY MATTHEW PENNINGTON  
The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Security officials revealed Tuesday that a Tanzanian Al-Qaida operative arrested in Pakistan last July for his alleged role in the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in east Africa that killed more than 200 people has been handed over to U.S. officials and flown out of the country. Ahmed Khalaf Ghailani, who was on the FBI list of most wanted terrorists, was shifted out of Pakistan months ago, but the security officials said they don't know where he was taken. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad declined to comment.

Ghailani, believed to be aged between 30 and 34, has been indicted in the Southern District of New York for his alleged role in the 1998 bombings in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya. Twelve Americans were among those killed.

He was captured by Pakistani intelligence agents in July after a shootout in the eastern city of Gujrat. About 15 other people, including women and children, were arrested with him, but it's unclear what has happened to them.

Until Tuesday, officials had refused to provide any information on the whereabouts of Ghailani, who had a \$5 million bounty on his head.

"He (Ghailani) was turned over to our American friends months ago," a senior security official said on condition of anonymity. He would not say whether Ghailani had been shifted to the U.S. high security detention facility for terrorist suspects at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

"We have no idea, and as a matter of fact we don't ask such questions," he said.

Another security official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said Ghailani was handed over to the United States because he had committed a "heinous crime against them."

Ghailani was captured on a tip given to Pakistani officials by Mohammed Naem Noor Khan, a Pakistani and alleged Al-Qaida computer expert, who was arrested about two weeks before him in the eastern city of Lahore.

Information recovered from the suspects' computers allegedly included terrorist surveillance of possible attack targets in the United States and Britain and prompted a U.S. terror warning in August.

## Yushchenko pushing for membership in EU

BY CONSTANT BRAND  
The Associated Press

STRASBOURG, France — Ukraine's reformist leader Viktor Yushchenko insisted Tuesday his country can meet requirements to join the European Union and called on the 25-nation bloc to offer the prospect of full membership.

Addressing European officials during his maiden trip to the West, Yushchenko admitted that Ukraine, poor and with a legacy of corruption, had a long way to go but pledged to "reorganize the government so the process of integration into the EU becomes a real one."

EU officials have cautioned that Ukraine — like other potential applicants — could face a long wait before joining the EU. Earlier Tuesday, the European Commission gave no firm commitments, proposing more cooperation on trade, immigration, security and foreign relations.

Yushchenko, who took office on Sunday, said the European Union's future strategy "has to comprise the membership prospect."

"I'm sure Ukraine is the heart of Europe," he told the Council of

Europe, the continent's top human rights body. "The future of Europe is impossible without Ukraine."

Yushchenko's overtures to the West have alarmed the Kremlin, which openly backed his opponent, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, in last year's bitterly contested presidential election.

Yushchenko held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday to counter fears that he wants to take his country out of Moscow's sphere of influence. His appearance in Strasbourg and a planned address to the European Parliament in Brussels on Thursday were seen as the start of a delicate balancing act he will have to follow in coming years.

He told the Council of Europe that Ukraine would seek to build partnerships to the east and west.

EU foreign ministers are expected to review relations with Ukraine at a meeting in Brussels next week. One step Yushchenko would like to see is EU recognition of Ukraine as a market economy and backing for its entry in the World Trade Organization by the end of the year.

### Expert: Terrorists tap into smuggling

VIENNA, Austria — Trafficking people for forced labor and sexual slavery has become the world's No. 2 most lucrative crime, and terrorists are using shadowy underground networks to move around, a senior U.S. counter-trafficking official warned Tuesday.

Human trafficking, particularly the smuggling and enslavement of young women for prostitution, is tied with weapons smuggling as the second-largest illegal moneymaking activity, said T. March Bell, the U.S. Justice Department's senior special counsel for trafficking issues and civil rights.

### 4 injured in Samurai sword attack

MADRID, Spain — Assaults wounding Samurai swords attacked four Asians in a Barcelona restaurant, inflicting cuts on the head and hands in an ap-

## IN THE STATES

Secretary of State Colin Powell, right, speaks last week to National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, his nominated successor, during the inauguration of President Bush in Washington.

AP



## Senate begins debating Rice's State nomination

BY BARRY SCHWEID  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. Edward M. Kennedy and other Democrats on Tuesday assailed President Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq and declared they would oppose Condoleezza Rice's nomination as secretary of state as the principal architect of a failed policy.

Kennedy, of Massachusetts, keyed the Democratic attack with charges that Rice, as Bush's national security adviser, provided Congress with "false reasons" for going to war. Had she not, he said in a speech, "it might have changed the course of history."

Sen. Mark Dayton, D-Minn., following up, accused the Bush administration of lying and said he was voting against Rice's confirmation as a way of trying to stop mistakes.

Still, Rice's confirmation as Colin Powell's replacement appeared not to be in doubt. Sens. Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia and Barbara Boxer of California are among other Democrats lined up to get their likes in Tuesday, even though many Democrats may wind up in Rice's column when the vote is taken.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., spoke in Rice's favor.

Republicans rallied behind Rice — and President Bush — with briefer speeches. Nine hours have been set aside for the debate, divided equally between the two parties.

Byrd and Boxer, opponents of the war from the outset, had one-hour speeches scheduled. They consider the war a mistake and Bush's postwar strategy inadequate as determined insurgents take a rising toll of American casualties. They hold Rice at least partly responsible, since she was Bush's White House national security adviser during his first term.

On Wednesday, a brief series of statements by senators is expected, setting up the vote to put Rice in charge of U.S. diplomacy.

"We are talking about the safety and security of this country, so I very much and very quickly want to move with Secretary Rice," Senate Republican leader Bill Frist of Tennessee said Tuesday.

Frist said he was disappointed by the delay and was confident the Senate would confirm her on Wednesday.

The White House had been confident that Rice would be approved last week, and State Department officials were alerted to show up Friday morning to greet her with smiles and applause.

But Democratic critics insisted on an opportunity to air their views on the Senate floor.

On the Republican side, Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, which recommended confirmation last week with a 16-2 vote, was scheduled to speak and to summon other Republican senators make speeches in Rice's behalf.

In the meantime, Secretary Powell, who gave his a farewell speech at the State Department on Wednesday, remains on the job.

# Bush seeks more money for Iraq and Afghanistan

## \$80 billion sought as deficit projections loom

BY ALAN FRAM  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As Congress started to digest a new Bush administration request of \$80 billion to bankroll wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, its top budget analyst on Tuesday projected \$855 billion in deficits for the next decade even without the costs of war and Bush's Social Security plan.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the administration would outline its request for more money for Iraq and Afghanistan later Tuesday. He would provide no detail, but congressional aides said the package would total about \$80 billion and be mostly for U.S. military operations in the two countries.

Congress approved \$25 billion for the wars last summer. Using figures compiled by the Congressional Research Service, which

prepares reports for lawmakers, the newest request would push the totals provided for the conflicts and worldwide efforts against terrorism past \$300 billion. That includes \$25 billion already provided for rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan.

McClellan said the administration would request what is needed for U.S. troops and "to support the Iraqi people as they move forward on building a democratic and peaceful future."

Amid the White House's preparations, the Congressional Budget Office predicted the government will accumulate another \$855 billion in deficits over the next decade.

The projection, for the years 2006 through 2015, is almost two-thirds smaller than what congressional budget analysts predicted last fall. But the drop is

largely due to estimating quirks that required it to exclude future Iraq and Afghanistan war costs and other expenses. Last September, their 10-year deficit estimate was \$2.3 trillion.

The CBO also projected this year's shortfall will be \$368 billion. That was close to the \$348 billion deficit for 2005 that it had forecast last fall. The two largest deficits ever in dollar terms were last year's \$412 billion and the \$377 billion gap of 2003.

The budget office estimated if U.S. troop strength in Iraq and Afghanistan declines gradually after 2006, those wars would add \$590 billion to deficits over the next decade. Including war costs, this year's shortfall should hit about \$400 billion, the budget office said.

Bush won't send the war financing package to Congress until after he unveils his full 2006 budget on Feb. 7, congressional aides said.

## Bush meets with black leaders

BY NEDRA PICKLER  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush is opening the White House this week to black leaders including pastors and legislators, a second-term overture to a community that overwhelmingly opposed his re-election.

"I believe in fresh starts," said Rep. Melvin Watt, new chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, which has had an adversarial relationship with Bush but has a chance to get off on a better footing at a meeting Wednesday.

The meeting with black lawmakers comes after Bush is receiving 14 black clergy and 10 black leaders in business and non-profit agencies Tuesday afternoon at the White House.

Exit polls showed that Bush received just 11 percent of the black vote in November's election, a slight increase over the 9 percent he received four years earlier.

"This is an opportunity for the president to talk about our priorities and the agenda," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said. "It's also an opportunity for the president to listen to issues of interest to these leaders."

During last year's political campaigns, Republican officials said they were making a more concerted effort to reach out to blacks through religious leaders. Bush campaign aides cited issues such as school vouchers and the president's support of a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage that could help him gain more support among blacks.

Bush's efforts to steer more federal dollars to social programs conducted by so-called faith-based groups also has been received favorably by church leaders.

The Congressional Black Caucus, with a membership of 43 Democratic legislators, is meeting with Bush for only the third time as a group, although the president has met separately with individual members on other occasions.

## U.S. to freeze Syrian man's financial assets

BY JEANNINE AVERSA  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States moved Tuesday to financially paralyze a Syrian man believed to help bankroll insurgents in Iraq by providing support to al-Qaida's top operative in the war-torn country.

The Treasury Department's action against Sulayman Khalid Darwish means that any banks accounts or financial assets belonging to him that are found in this country are frozen. The United States is also asking the United Nations' member countries to freeze Darwish's assets.

The U.S. government contends that Darwish provided financial and material support to terror networks run by Abu-Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaida's top operative in Iraq.

The action comes with the Iraq election looming. "This terrorist financier is helping support al-Zarqawi, who has launched violent acts against our troops, coalition partners and the Iraqi people," Treasury Secretary John Snow said in a statement. "Identifying and freezing operatives and choking off the flow of blood money moves us closer to our ultimate goal of fracturing

the financial backbone of the Iraqi insurgency and al-Qaida," he said.

The U.S. government alleges that, among other things, Darwish served as one of al-Zarqawi's operatives and was involved in fund-raising and recruiting for the organization.

"Darwish handles mostly financial duties for al-Zarqawi, collecting and distributing funds for him," Treasury said. "Specifically, Darwish sent donations of \$10,000 to \$12,000 to al-Zarqawi in Iraq every 20-25 days. Darwish sent the money into Iraq through suicide attack volunteers who were entering the country."

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## OPINION

## With our support, Abbas can make progress

The Washington Post

Two months after the death of Yasser Arafat, politicians such as President Bush and Britain's Tony Blair are still making speeches about a "moment of opportunity" for progress toward an Israeli-Palestinian peace. But moments pass quickly and, in the Gaza Strip, this one already is in motion.

Mahmoud Abbas, who was inaugurated as the new Palestinian president only 111 days ago, was immediately challenged by Islamic militants as well as by fighters from his own Fatah organization who defied his calls for a cease-fire by staging attacks on Israeli checkpoints and firing rockets at a nearby town. Israel responded with its own deadly raids and threatened a full-scale invasion of Gaza.

To his credit, Abbas responded decisively, deploying hundreds of Palestinian security forces to prevent further violence, in cooperation with Israel. In doing so, he preserved his new administration from an instant loss of authority. But the situation remains both fluid and fragile. It could be helped by timely intervention from the foreign leaders who have been making those speeches.

The first burden still lies with Abbas, who must demonstrate both to his people and to the world that he will decisively

break with Arafat's losing strategy of publicly deploring violence against Israel while preserving and sometimes encouraging terrorist organizations.

Abbas' intention has been to persuade the militants to agree to a cease-fire. While that might be a useful move, the events of [last] week have demonstrated that political pressure alone will not suffice. The deployment of Palestinian forces was an important first step by Abbas toward asserting military as well as political authority. But it needs to be quickly followed up with reorganization of the various Palestinian security services and disarming those outside them.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who suspended contacts with Abbas as a way of pressing for action, is cooperating with the Palestinian effort to impose order. As he prepares for the planned withdrawal of Israeli settlements and soldiers from Gaza, Sharon has much to gain through collaboration with Abbas. A peaceful pullout governed by accord between the Palestinian Authority and Israel would be a political victory for both leaders, while a unilateral Israeli withdrawal would be exactly what extremist groups are aiming at.

If the rockets and suicide bombings continue, Israel may have no choice but to take its own defensive action. But if Abbas gets results, Israel should cease its attacks on militants.



Many in Israel will oppose that step. They prefer the policy Sharon pursued until November, which was to unilaterally redraw Israel's borders and indefinitely postpone negotiations with Palestinians.

That's where Bush, Blair and others ought to come in. U.S. officials have been rightly pressing Abbas not to shrink from

the militants' challenge, and they have been encouraging Israel to show restraint.

But the administration also has a role to play in encouraging and brokering a more enduring Israeli-Palestinian security agreement that maximizes the chances for ending the violence in Gaza. If that much-talked-about moment is really to be seized, now is the time for U.S. involvement.

## Plan for study on gun ownership won't leave holster

The National Research Council, billed as "advisers to the nation on science, engineering and medicine," released a report last month that found there's not enough statistical evidence available to determine whether efforts to control violence by restricting guns are effective.

J.R. Labbe



The spinmeisters on the gun-control-vs.-gun-rights debate could have a heyday with this.

The NRC's analysis says that what America needs is a federally supported "robust research program" on firearms to answer questions such as whether there should be restrictions on who may possess firearms, on the number or types of guns that can be purchased, and whether safety locks should be required.

"These and many related policy questions cannot be answered definitively because of large gaps in the existing science base," Charles F. Wellford, a professor of criminal justice at the University of Maryland, College Park, and the chairman of the committee that wrote the report, said in a news release.

A "federal" research project, huh? Think Alfred Kinsey had a tough time getting 1950s America to talk honestly about human sexuality? That was nothing compared to getting gun owners in 2005 to truthfully tell the government about what's in their safes and night stands. Imagine, if you will, the telephone rings.

What voice says: "Ms. Labbe, we're calling today on behalf of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct a survey on gun ownership in America."

What gun owner hears: "We're the feds. We have your name, we have your phone number, we know where you live, and we think gun owners are diseased."

What voice says: "How many firearms do

you own?"

What gun owner says: "None of your business." Click. Dial tone.

On an intellectual level, the need for a definitive study is apparent. Just look at the point-counterpoints that are spun these days from an issue such as the impact of right-to-carry laws. Thirty-four states, including Texas, have statutes that allow certain adults to carry concealed handguns. Every time another state legislature takes a look at proposing a similar law, the gun-control people go ballistic about how it will lead to increased violent crime.

The gun-rights crowd matches the rhetoric by saying such laws decrease violent crime. Both sides cite existing studies that bolster their arguments.

Just this month, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence United With The Million Mom March (seriously, that's what's on the top of the electronic news release) warned that "most U.S. states don't make the grade" when it comes to gun violence prevention laws.

Of course, the Brady Center assumes that any state with a concealed-carry law is an

evil place and automatically marks it down — even though, according to the NRC, definitive research to support that supposition doesn't exist.

The NRC report said that new research tools are needed to evaluate right-to-carry laws — that it is impossible to draw any strong conclusions about their effects from research on hand. The center is calling for the development of a National Violent Death Reporting System and a National Incident-Based Reporting System to begin collecting data.

Yet here's the problem with an "incident-based" reporting system: When a gun owner successfully thwarts a crime by "using" a firearm, often it occurs without a shot being fired. If you scare off an intruder at your home by displaying a gun, what are the odds that you'll call the local sheriff to report it? Slim.

When is an incident not an incident? When it's not reported.

But now we're back to the "anecdotes do not solid data make" refrain that can legitimately be voiced by the gun-control advocates.

When asked her thoughts about a national

research project on firearm ownership, Alice Tripp provided an answer that reflects the quandary that some gun owners might find themselves in if queried in a survey.

"My immediate response would be ... I ain't saying nothing!" said Tripp, an Austin lobbyist for the Texas State Rifle Association. "But then my second impulse is to want people to understand that I consider protecting rights to be paramount and that personal safety is necessary and instinctive."

It is important to note that the NRC study does not address specific state or federal gun policies — only the quality of available research data on firearm violence, control and prevention efforts.

And the quality isn't good, not if opposing sides can look at existing studies on, say, suicide and criminal violence and reach conflicting conclusions on what role gun ownership by private citizens plays in those statistics.

But good luck, Uncle Sam, on gathering accurate data on who owns firearms.

Jill "J.R." Labbe is a senior editorial writer and columnist for the Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram.

## Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



# Cape Cod hit hard by storm

## Hurricane-force winds create massive snow drifts

BY MATT PITTA

The Associated Press

DENNIS, Mass. — Charlie Chamberlain has seen a lot of Cape Cod winters in his nearly 80 years. But the Dennis resident says last weekend's tops everything.

"I've never seen it as bad as this," Chamberlain, 76, said as he watched cleanup operations at the Patriot Square shopping plaza in South Dennis on Monday afternoon.

Up to three feet of snow combined with hurricane-force winds piled up snow drifts several feet high across Cape Cod. The sheer volume of the snow rendered traditional snow plows useless.

Instead, large front-end loaders were called in to clear highways, secondary roads and parking lots.

As crews worked to clear Great Western Road in Dennis, they encountered stranded cars, abandoned by their helpless drivers during the height of the storm Sunday.

All over Massachusetts on Monday, massive piles of snow, 10 to 15 feet high, loomed over street corners, driveways and parking lots.

With temperatures expected to stay below freezing for the next few days, the snow is not going anywhere.

"It looks like temperatures are going to stay basi-

cally in the 20s for the rest of the week," said Tracy McCormick, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Taunton.

And just to add insult to injury, more snow is expected on Wednesday morning, albeit "not nearly as much as the Blizzard of '05," she said.

Logan International Airport battled a power outage on Monday that slowed things down again just hours after it had resumed operations following the storm.

Many residents were still stuck at home Monday because towns abandoned plowing efforts that were futile against winds that piled the snow into drifts up to six feet high. Bruce MacNay, 46, was trapped in his home in South Dennis for 24 hours before the plows reached him on Monday afternoon.

A second day of canceled classes for many Massachusetts schools on Tuesday means more winter fun for young children.

"They love it, no school, that's good for them," said Elizabeth Kennealy, 43, of Dennis, as she left one of the few open supermarkets on Cape Cod with a gallon of milk and a loaf of bread.

Some residents of the South shore were blocked from getting into their houses by ocean flooding that later forced. Seaside homes in Hull and Scituate resembled igloos after they were encased in ice by winds whipping up spray from the crashing waves.



Hugo Cerna on Monday shovels a walkway covered with almost five feet of snow after a weekend blizzard in Somerville, Mass., on Monday.

# Ex-priest on trial in Mass.

BY DENISE LAVOIE

The Associated Press

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Former priest Paul Shanley told a 6-year-old boy, "If you tell, no one will believe you," before molesting him at a Newton parish in the early 1980s, a prosecutor said Tuesday. But the defense said his story was concocted in order to bring a lawsuit.

The boy didn't tell anyone for nearly 20 years, recovering his memory of the alleged abuse only after hearing of media reports about the sex scandal in the Boston Archdiocese, Assistant District Attorney Lynn Rooney said during opening statements in Shanley's child rape trial in Middlesex Superior Court.

"Those memories were buried deep inside," Rooney said.

Shanley's lawyer Frank Mondano said the accuser made up the allegations against Shanley to get his multimillion-dollar settlements for victims in the scandal.

The accuser repeatedly changed his story after coming forward in early 2002, Mondano



Opening statements were scheduled to begin Tuesday in the child rape case against defrocked Catholic priest Paul Shanley, who appeared in court last Thursday.

said. And he said he would call expert witnesses to debunk the science behind so-called repressed memories.

Personal injury lawyers. Rooney acknowledged that the man got \$300,000 in a civil settlement with the archdiocese last year, but she said his willingness to testify publicly about being repeatedly raped by Shanley shows he is motivated by more than money.

Shanley, who turned 74 on Tuesday, faces three charges of raping a child and two charges of indecent assault and battery on a child.

The maximum sentence is life in prison.

# 17 priests disciplined in N.Y.

The Associated Press

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. — The Roman Catholic Church has disciplined 17 priests of a New York diocese for sexual abuse allegations.

The Diocese of Rockville Centre on Long Island informed parishioners of the actions in a three-page letter that said the status of sex abuse cases against 23 priests.

Bishop William F. Murphy reported that eight priests were defrocked by the Vatican, nine were permanently suspended, three await canonical trials and two have been cleared. Proceedings against another have been deferred.

Several victims' rights groups criticized the bishop, saying the identities of the disciplined priests should be made public.

# Study: Many blacks cite AIDS plot

BY DARRYL FEARS

The Washington Post

More than 20 years after the AIDS epidemic arrived in the United States, a significant proportion of blacks embrace the theory that government scientists created the disease to control or wipe out their communities, according to a study released Tuesday by Rand Corp. and Oregon State University.

That belief markedly hurts efforts to prevent the spread of the disease among black Americans, the study's authors and activists said.

Blacks represent 13 percent of the U.S. population, according to Census Bureau figures, yet they account for 50 percent of new HIV infections in the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Nearly half of the 500 African-Americans surveyed said that HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is man-made. The study, which was supported by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, appears in the Feb. 1 edition of the journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes.

More than one-quarter said

they believed that AIDS was produced in a government laboratory, and 12 percent believed it was created and spread by the CIA.

A slight majority said they believe that a cure for AIDS is being withheld from the poor. Forty-four percent said people who take the new medicines for HIV are government guinea pigs, and 15 percent said AIDS is a form of genocide against black people.

At the same time, 75 percent said they believe medical and public health agencies are working to stop the spread of AIDS in black communities. But the responses, which varied only slightly by age, gender, education and income level, alarmed the researchers.

"As a researcher knowing that these beliefs were out there, I wasn't as surprised as people I share the study with," said Laura Bogart, a behavioral scientist for the Rand Corp., who co-authored the study with Sheryl Thorburn, associate professor in the College of Health and Human Sciences at Oregon State.

"But the findings are striking, and a wake-up call to the prevention community," Bogart said. "The prevention community has not addressed conspiracy beliefs

in the context of prevention. I think that a lot of people involved in prevention may not be from the community where they are trying to prevent HIV."

The findings also do not surprise to Na'im Akbar, a professor of psychology at Florida State University who specializes in behavior of blacks.

"This is not a bunch of crazy people running around saying they're out to get us," Akbar said. The belief "comes from the reality of 300 years of slavery and 100 years of post-slavery exploitation."

Akbar cited the Tuskegee experiment conducted by the federal government between 1932 and 1972. In it, scientists told black men they were being treated for syphilis but actually withheld treatment so they could study the course of the disease.

Today, he said, blacks are more likely to live in communities near pollution sources, such as freeways and oil refineries, and far from health care centers. "There are a lot of indicators that our lives are not valued," Akbar said.

Black women made up 73 percent of new HIV cases among women in 2003, and black men represented 40 percent of new cases, according to the most recent federal figures available.

## Plan adopted for N.M. drilling

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Despite protests by the governor and environmentalists, the federal government decided to open nearly all of New Mexico's vast Otero Mesa for exploratory drilling but vowed that the oil and gas industry won't have a "free-for-all."

The decision Monday by the Bureau of Land Management permanently protects about 124,000 acres of the roughly 2 million-acre mesa, one of North America's largest remaining pieces of Chihuahuan desert grassland.

Gov. Bill Richardson and environmentalists, including the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and Denver-based Earthjustice, promised a court battle.

"The state is going to fight this with everything we've got," Richardson said.

## Fire disrupts N.Y. subway lines

NEW YORK — One of the city's busiest subway lines has been suspended and another severely limited, possibly for years, after a fire destroyed an equipment room at a station in lower Manhattan.

The C line — which runs through Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens — was suspended Sunday following the fire at the Chambers Street station and will be out of service indefinitely, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said Monday.

The MTA said it also was severely limiting the A line, which runs parallel to the C line.

The MTA said service may be gradually restored, but it could take a few years to completely replace the damaged equipment and return the lines to full service.

From The Associated Press

# 'Aviator' tabs 11 Oscar nominations



MIRAMAX FILMS/AP

Actor Leonardo DiCaprio appears in a scene from *'The Aviator,'* which was nominated Tuesday for 11 Academy Awards, including best picture and best actor for DiCaprio as Howard Hughes.

## 'Million Dollar Baby' and 'Finding Neverland' get 7 nods

By DAVID GERMAIN  
The Associated Press

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — The Howard Hughes epic *"The Aviator"* led Academy Awards contenders with 11 nominations Tuesday, including best picture, plus acting honors for Leonardo DiCaprio, Cate Blanchett and Alan Alda and a directing slot for Martin Scorsese.

The boxing saga *"Million Dollar Baby"* and the J.M. Barrie tale *"Finding Neverland"* followed with seven nominations each, among them best picture and acting nominations for Clint Eastwood, Morgan Freeman, Hilary Swank and Johnny Depp.

Eastwood also got a directing nomination for *"Million Dollar Baby."*

The other best-picture nominees were the Ray Charles portrait *"Ray"* and the buddy comedy *"Sideways."*

Along with Eastwood, Jamie Foxx also scored two nominations, as best actor for the title

role in *"Ray"* and supporting actor as a taxi driver whose cab is hijacked by a hit man in *"Collateral."*

Starring as aviation trail-blazer and Hollywood rebel Hughes, DiCaprio also was nominated for best actor. He and Foxx will compete against Depp as *"Peter Pan"* playright Barrie in *"Finding Neverland"*; Eastwood as a cantankerous boxing trainer in *"Million Dollar Baby"*; and Don Cheadle for *"Hotel Rwanda,"* starting as a hotel manager Paul Rusesabagira, who sheltered refugees from the Rwandan genocide.

The best-actress category presents a rematch of the 1999 showdown to smuggle heroin in *"Mafia Full of Grace"*; Inelda Stanton



Foxx



Eastwood

Cry" over Annette Bening, who had been the front-runner for *"American Beauty."*

This time, Swank was nominated as a bullheaded boxing champ in *"Million Dollar Baby."* Bening was nominated for *"Being Julia,"* in which she plays an aging 1930s stage diva exacting wickedly comic revenge on the men in her life and a young rival.

Both actresses won Golden Globes for the roles, Swank for best dramatic actress and Bening for actress in a musical or comedy.

Also nominated for the best-actress Oscar were Catalina Sandino Moreno as a Colombian woman imperiled when she signs on to smuggle heroin in *"Mafia Full of Grace"*; Inelda Stanton

as a saintly housekeeper in 1950s Britain who performs illegal abortions on the side in *"Vera Drake"*; and Kate Winslet as a woman who has had memories of her ex-boyfriend rendered in *"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind."*

Joining Eastwood and Scorsese among directing nominees are Taylor Hackford for *"Ray"*; Mike Leigh for *"Vera Drake"*; and Alexander Payne for *"Sideways."*

Scorsese, arguably the most prominent modern filmmaker who has never won an Oscar, also has never delivered a best-picture winner.

Considered a nominal best-picture favorite, *"The Aviator"* offers him a shot to finally triumph on Oscar night, though Eastwood's *"Million Dollar Baby"* is a formidable competitor.

*"The Aviator"* won the Golden Globe for best-dramatic film, but Eastwood beat out Scorsese for the directing prize at the Globes.

ABC will broadcast the Oscars live Feb. 27 from Hollywood. Chris Rock is the show's host.

## Razzies pick Hollywood's worst

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Razzies, which mock the worst in film, gave *"Catwoman"* a leading seven nominations Monday, among them worst picture, worst actress for Halle Berry and worst supporting players for Sharon Stone and Lambert Wilson. *"Catwoman"* also was nominated for worst screen couple for Berry with either Stone or co-star Benjamin Bratt.

*"Catwoman"* is the cinematic equivalent of a clump in the cat-litter box. Razzies founder John Wilson said.

The historical bomb *"Alexander"* was second with six Razzie nominations, including worst picture, actor Colin Farrell, actress Angelina Jolie and director Oliver Stone.

The other worst-picture contenders were the family action comedy *"Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2,"* the holiday debacle *"Surviving Christmas"* and the cross-dressing comedy *"White Chicks."*

President Bush and some of his advisers received worst-acting nominations for their appearances in news and archival footage in Michael Moore's *"Fahrenheit 9/11,"* which assails Bush for his post-Sept. 11 actions.

Bush was nominated for worst actor, while Secretary of State-designate Condoleezza Rice got a nomination for worst supporting actress and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for worst supporting actor.

Along with Bush and Farrell, worst-actor nominees were Ben

Affleck for *"Jersey Girl"* and *"Surviving Christmas"*; Vin Diesel for *"The Chronicles of Riddick"*; and Ben Stiller for *"Along Came Polly."* *"Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy,"* *"Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story,"* *"Envoy"* and *"Starsky & Hutch."*

Joining Berry and Jolie as worst-actress contenders were Hilary Duff for *"A Cinderella Story"* and *"Raise Your Voice,"* and two pairs of siblings: Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen for *"New York Minute"* and Shawn and Marlon Wayans, who play federal agents in drag in *"White Chicks."* The Olsen twins and the Wayans brothers also had nominations as worst screen couples.

Selected by about 500 members of the Golden Raspberry Foundation, Razzie winners will be announced Feb. 26.



NBC/AP

Ed McMahon, left, speaks with Jay Leno, the host of *"The Tonight Show with Jay Leno,"* during a tribute to Johnny Carson during the taping of Monday's show in Burbank, Calif. Carson died Sunday at 79.

## Leno remembers Carson

By CHRIS T. NGUYEN  
The Associated Press

BURBANK, Calif. — Jay Leno turned back the clock on *"The Tonight Show"* with a touching hour-long tribute to Johnny Carson that mixed warm remembrances from the former host's friends with the more outrageous moments during Carson's three-decade reign as the king of late-night comedy.

Carson, who handed the show's reins over to Leno when he retired nearly 13 years ago, died Sunday of complications from emphysema. He was 79.

"As you all know, this has been a tough 24 hours for those of us that are fans of Johnny Carson," a subdued Leno said as he opened the show.

"Johnny was the best, plain and simple," Leno said as his studio audience sat in rapt silence. "And the best way to sum it up is, I guess, you know, you had to be there. If you were not there, you were not enough to be watching during Johnny's 30-year run, consider yourself lucky, because you're

not going to see the likes of him ever again."

Although it was a somber opening, the laughs soon followed when Leno welcomed to the show three of Carson's closest friends, former *"Tonight Show"* announcer Ed McMahon and comedians Don Rickles and Bob Newhart.

For years, Carson was late-night television's arbiter of comedy, as clips showed him introducing a stable of future stars, including a dark-haired Leno, a young Roseanne, a bushy-haired Steven Wright, and Drew Carey, who Carson stunned by calling him over to his desk to offer his congratulations after Carey's first standup appearance.

"That was the greatest day of my whole life," Carey told Leno on Monday.

Another clip showed him giving the coveted OK sign to a young Jerry Seinfeld.

Missing from Monday's show was Carson's longtime bandleader Doc Severinsen, but he made an appearance on CNN's *"Larry King Live,"* where he told King he was still grieving.



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## Pretty weeds

**WA** WENATCHEE — They look like simple yellow flowers amid golden hills, but the blooms on the front of the new North Central Washington telephone book are just weeds.

Even the former U.S. Forest Service employee who won the annual Cover Photo Contest sponsored by Hagadone Directories Inc. knew it showed Dalmatian toadflax, listed as a noxious weed by Washington, Oregon, Idaho and other states.

"It's pretty, but it's very obnoxious," said Terry Nowka, coordinator of the Chelan County Noxious Weed Control Board for 13 years. "Every year I catch little old ladies digging it up and planting it in their flower beds."

## Faker gets jail time

**ME** MACHIAS — A 54-year-old man who routinely complained of fake chest pains to avoid paying the tab for restaurant meals may have gotten his just deserts.

Judge sentenced Elias I. Elias to 90 days in jail after he pleaded guilty to theft of services.

The Aug. 5 incident at the Townhouse Restaurant marked the 13th time that Elias tried to skip out on the check by pretending he had trouble breathing and was having a heart attack.

Authorities said Elias would order dinner and drinks, eat and enjoy, then fake his need for medical assistance when the check arrived. He would be taken to a local hospital but usually left before police arrived.

Elias' court-appointed attorney, Jeffrey Davidson, told the judge that the homeless and unemployed man just "wanted to eat a restaurant meal 'like anybody else.'"

## Fatal wreck kills three

**HI** HILO — Three people were killed in a traffic accident in South Kohala, Big Island fire officials said.

One survivor was taken to North Hawaii Community Hospital in extremely critical condition, they said.

The accident occurred on Queen Kaahumanu Highway when two vehicles collided head-on.

The three people who died showed no signs of life when firefighters arrived at the scene, the officials said.

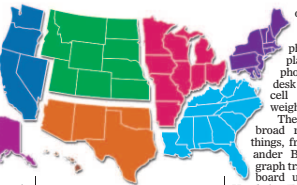
## Environmental lottery

**NJ** TRENTON — The New Jersey Lottery could generate a different kind of green, if plans for a new environmentally beneficial game get off the ground.

Environmental Protection Commissioner Bradley Campbell promised to discuss the idea for a lottery game to benefit the environment with the state treasurer, but cautioned that approval of such a game is not a sure thing.

Green Action Alliance Chairman Ed Knorr came up with the idea for the "Best Dam Lottery Game," whose proceeds would be dedicated to public and private well testing for senior citizens and low-income households in the state.

The already lucrative Lottery generated \$765 million for higher education and other institutions in 2003.



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Restaurateur kidnapped

**TX** DALLAS — Days after Oscar J. Sanchez was kidnapped following a staged accident not far from two of the Dallas restaurants his family owns, police shifted from bringing him back alive to searching for his body.

After days of not hearing from his kidnappers, who had once demanded as much as \$3 million, they arrested one of two suspects as he tried to flee the country on an international flight out of Chicago Midway Airport. Another man is believed to be in Mexico.

Police said there could be a third, unknown suspect.

Jose Alberto Felix, 28, told investigators that a homicide had occurred at his Duncanville home, Police Lt. Jan Easterling said.

Police who searched Felix's home reported signs of a bloody struggle. Based on the interview with Felix, Easterling said, authorities believe Sanchez, 30, is dead.

### Retro phones

**OR** EUGENE — Too young to remember those clunky cell phones of the early 1980s? Look no more.

The Telephone Pioneer Museum has got the number of phone lovers and others who are just plain curious.



### Just looking around

A baby ebony langur rests Friday with its mother in JungleWorld, the Bronx Zoo's warm and lush tropical Asian rain forest in New York. The baby was born Jan. 12. The ebony langur is native to Indonesia.

ous. The quirky museum in Eugene has phones galore on display — Pink Princess phones, old fashioned desk phones, even a 1980s cell phone about the weight of a brick.

The museum houses a broad range of fascinating things, from replicas of Alexander Bell's harmonic telegraph transmitter to a switchboard used by the Shinko Hotel in Eastern Oregon from 1907 to 1947.

Wichmann said kids who tour the museum want to know where the redial button is on the old phones. He said he holds up his index tells them, "There's your redial, right there."

### Motorcycle helmets

**ME** AUGUSTA — In Maine, where there hasn't been a whisper of a helmet law for 15 years, a proposal to require the protective headgear has suddenly ridden into Augusta.

Maine had a helmet law for a decade before lawmakers repealed it in 1977. Sponsors of bills to bring back the law returned faithfully to the State House for years following repeal, only to be met by determined bikers, clad in leathers, who said "no way" to the proposals.

Now, a bill calling for helmet use by all operators and passengers of motorcycles, on or off the highways, has appeared. It would make Maine the 21st state, along with the District of Columbia, that require helmet use by all motorcycle drivers and their passengers.

The sponsor, Rep. Walter Wheeler, D-Kittery, said he sponsored the bill at the request of an 86-year-old constituent whose young relative was critically injured in a motorcycle accident.

### Sex offender arrested

**GA** CARTERSVILLE — A convicted sex offender wanted for allegedly kidnapping "an 11-year-old boy from his school in Florida was arrested, two days after the boy was found safe.

Frederick Fretz, 42, was arrested after police received a tip that a man resembling him was hitchhiking near Interstate 75 in Cartersville, about 40 miles north of Atlanta.

Authorities in Marion County, Fla., said they had issued two warrants against Fretz, one for violation of parole and another for failure to register as a sex offender, a felony.

There was also a federal warrant issued for kidnapping.

### Forehead for sale

**NE** OMAHA — A Web-page designer who auctioned off the use of his forehead for advertising space is letting it go to his head.

Andrew Fischer, 20, of Omaha, who put his forehead for sale on eBay as advertising space, received \$37,375 on Friday to advertise the snoring remedy SnoreStop. Fischer will display the SnoreStop logo on his forehead for one month.

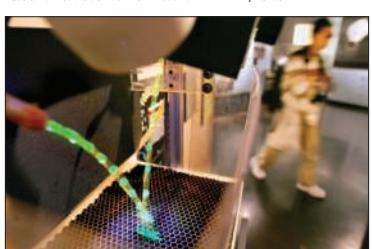
"I look forward to an enjoyable association with Andrew — a man who clearly has a head for business in every sense of the word," SnoreStop CEO Christian de Rivel said.

"People will always comment on something out of the ordinary," Fischer said in his sales pitch. "People like weird."



### Walking the line

Ken Carlisle uses a leaf blower Saturday to clear debris from the Z&O Railroad track at Ellen Trout Park in Lufkin, Texas.



### Piddling along

Two streams of fluorescent-dyed water exhibit in an interactive display called "remarkable double piddler hydraulic happening machine" as a visitor walks through the Harold Edgerton collection at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Museum, in Cambridge, Mass..



### Gagged for life

With the Capitol building in the background, pro-life activists Taryn Allen, from Washington, right, and Jesse Haugan, from Ottertail, Minn., fight the cold Saturday in Washington, D.C., to stage a silent protest at the Supreme Court.





## Inferno drizzling

A firefighter sprays water Sunday on a large pile of burning molded fiber apple and egg crates at the Keyes Fiber plant in Wenatchee, Wash. A storage building was damaged along with large piles of pallets and paper products in the three-alarm fire.



## Too cold for man and beast

Water vapor freezes around the muzzle of a horse during a workout Monday at the Saratoga Raceway in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. The air temperature was -13.



## Crystalline rose

A red rose is encrusted in a shield of ice at Dewar Nurseries Inc. of Florida in Apopka, Fla., on Sunday as the overnight temperature dropped to 29 degrees.



## Pole-ing station

Andrew Moreno, 10, spends Sunday trying his fishing luck at Young Park in Las Cruces, N.M.

## Shortage of nurses

**RI** PROVIDENCE — Hospitals say they're straining to find room for the sick in the middle of flu season as a nursing shortage continues.

Roger Williams Medical Center is housing patients in areas normally used for cancer treatment, marshaling administrators to help with non-clinical tasks and calling in staff to work extra shifts.

Officials at Rhode Island Hospital said they're housing the overflow of patients in a former cancer ward in the vacant George Clinic.

## Lunch by lobbyists

**AR** LITTLE ROCK — Most legislators here for their session receive \$110 a day from the state for food and lodging. But many eat at lobbyists' expense. About 50 legislators had lunch recently courtesy of the Arkansas Trial Lawyers Association.

They were treated to beef brisket, chicken breasts, chocolate cake and strawberry cake. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, only Wisconsin places an outright ban on all food from lobbyists.

## Paying higher taxes

**MA** BOSTON — The Boston Sunday Globe found that homeowners across the state will pay more this year in property taxes, with double-digit percentage increases in at least 40 cities and towns.

Tax bills are increasing because residential property values continue to rise while commercial values remain steady or decline.

Cuts in state aid and voter-approved overrides of property tax limits are other factors, the newspaper reported.

## Gang activity increasing

**TX** DALLAS — Police officials say gang problems that plagued the city a decade ago are on the rise again. Dallas police reported an 83 percent increase in gang-related arrests last year. Incidents at schools increased from 92 in 2000-2001 to 245 last school year.

Officials believe gang members returning to the streets from prison are contributing to the increase.

## Firefighters killed

**NY** NEW YORK — Two veteran firefighters were killed and four others were seriously injured when they leaped from a fourth-floor window of a burning building in the Bronx. Later, a third firefighter died after fighting a basement fire in Brooklyn.

Lt. Curtis Meyran, 46, of Battalion 26, and Firefighter John Bellow, 37, of Ladder 27, died after battling the Bronx blaze on East 178th Street in the Morris Heights section, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg said. Three firefighters were in critical condition at St. Barnabas, and a fourth was in serious condition at Jacobi Medical Center.

The Brooklyn firefighter, Richard Scalfani, 37, died at a hospital after being injured at a two-alarm fire in the East New York section, Bloomberg said.

The six Bronx firefighters became trapped in the building while searching for people on the fourth floor, the mayor said.

"When the fire from the third floor broke through to the fourth, they were faced with a horrifying choice," he said. "They jumped out a fourth-floor window, knowing that they would be critically injured."

## Search called off

**OK** OKLAHOMA CITY — The search for a missing single-engine aircraft was suspended more than a week after authorities found no trace of the plane or the 73-year-old Muskogee physician who was flying it, the Civil Air Patrol said.

The small aircraft piloted by Dr. Jack Nolen disappeared on Jan. 14 after it left Paris, Texas, on a flight to Shawnee. The search was focused on a heavily wooded area in Hughes County west of the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant where air traffic controllers last picked up a signal.

"We have followed up everything that we can possibly follow up," CAP Maj. Charles Newcomb said. "We will not reopen it unless something significant develops."

## Frightening attack

**NH** NASHUA — A local man faces charges after police said he poured lighter fluid on a woman and threatened to light her on fire.

Brian Hayward, 18, is charged with reckless conduct and assault after police said he punched the woman several times in the face and body.

Hayward also faces charges for failing to appear in court in a separate case. Police said he being held at the police department until he can be brought to Nashua District Court.

## Military spending

**CO** COLORADO SPRINGS — This southern Colorado city has become the center of military spending in the state, officials say.

Four years ago, 44 percent of the defense spending in Colorado went to El Paso County. Now it has jumped to 61 percent for a total of \$1.5 billion in the last fiscal year. The county is home to five major military posts, including the Air Force Academy. The increased spending has helped the area bounce back from the technology sector bust of recent years.

## Prostitution sting

**NH** NASHUA — A five-month investigation to the arrest of a local man who allegedly ran a Web site offering to pay money for sexual favors.

Police arrested Terry Eddy, 49, after a sting operation and charged him with soliciting sex from an undercover officer. Police said a male officer communicated with Eddy through the Internet and set up a meeting.

Eddy also was charged with possession of a narcotic drug. He was released on bail and is scheduled to appear in Nashua District Court next month.

Stories and photos from wire services

## FACES

# Country boy in flip-flops

## Islander or country music star, Kenny Chesney learns it's best just to 'Be As You Are'

BY TERRY MORROW

Scripts Howard News Service

Kenny Chesney is finding a new way to live.

"In my life, everything that I do on the road is totally consumed by a time and schedule and a place to be and expectations," he says.

"Bob Seger [sang the lyric], 'What to leave in and what to leave out.' That's the way my life is."

And there's no slowing down for him at the moment. "Be As You Are," his latest CD, arrived Tuesday. The TV special of the same name, showing his getaway life in the U.S. Virgin Islands and containing musical numbers from the CD, aired last week in the States on cable's CMT.

In recent years, the always-on-the-go Chesney has retreated to the islands to get his head together. He puts away his guitar, lives on a boat, and what he describes as a stress-free sounding, idyllic life. This "vacation" for Chesney has inspired "Be As You Are."

"My life is pretty hectic," he says. "My life even under normal circumstances is pretty busy out on the road. This special shows the contrast between my life on the road and my life in the islands."

"There's a big difference." During an interview to talk about his new special, Chesney, 36, sinks into a leather couch. He's wearing a tight-fitting gray T-shirt, sandals, a cap, baggy pants and glasses. His guitar is close to his side, and he's smiling.

Before he can even answer the first question for an interview, a handler approaches with the word that he's due at another appointment soon.

Chesney isn't rattled by the news he has to hurry along yet again. He looks more like a man who is on vacation rather than the in-demand star he has become since string of hits—including "She Thinks My Tractor's Sexy," "The Good Stuff" and "How Forever Feels."

In the past decade, the Luttrell, Tenn., native has gone from being a B-list singer who played Dollywood to a genre-busting musical force of nature who is now tackling stadium tours.

"No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems," his 2002 release, sold 4 million copies, and he hangs with Kid Rock and Jimmy Buffet.

With that kind of spotlight shining on him and his work, Chesney is fully aware he has to step it up a notch, make more TV appearances, do more radio interviews, play bigger venues and get more people in those seats.

But despite the demands of such a meteoric rise, his nature is reflective these days.

"I'm happy," he says. "I have met people in the islands who have sort of shown me a different way to walk through the world."

"All I worry about when I am down there is what CD I am going to put in the CD player. It's either Jackson Browne or Bob Marley, you know what I mean?"

Chesney, who grew up modestly, is candid about what celebrity on this newest scale is like. It opens doors, but it also brings new pressure and expectations.

"I'll be honest with you man," he says. "I live on a boat two months out of the year, and if I did not have that, then I don't know how I'd be able to handle all this. ... I am a very intense person on stage. I have to remember why I am there, what I am doing. You can spend all day backstage preparing for the show and lose sight of why you are doing this. Off stage, I am a very simple kind of guy. I live my life in flip-flops."

Don't think for a minute, though, that Chesney is whining about the trappings of fame. He isn't. In fact, he laughs when he talks about the hype, demands and the pressure, referring to it jokingly as "that jam I'm in."

But like anyone else who has stress because of a career, Chesney is finding he needs a balance to set everything in order.

"If all this [fame] had happened to me all at one time, I would not have been able to handle the way I have," he says. "My life on the road has gotten bigger and bigger and bigger every single year."

He admits such celebrity can even be fearsome.

"It's scary," he says, "but I am kind of rolling into that, too."

*"I have met people in the islands who have sort of shown me a different way to walk through the world. All I worry about when I am down there is what CD I am going to put in the CD player. It's either Jackson Browne or Bob Marley, you know what I mean?"*

Kenny Chesney



ABACA PRESS/NRT

Kenny Chesney performs in a concert on November 23 for the Oxygen network in New York City. Chesney's newest CD, "Be As You Are" was released Tuesday. CMT, a country music cable station, featured the singer in a special also called "Be As You Are," showing his getaway life in the U.S. Virgin Islands and containing musical numbers from the CD.

## Owens almost not in ad

ABC's first choice for the "Monday Night Football" dropped towel episode wasn't Terrell Owens — it was announcer John Madden.

For reasons that are unclear, Madden couldn't find the time to perform for the skit. Owens, the Philadelphia Eagles receiver, filled in for him in the steamy sketch that drew viewer protests and a network apology, ABC Entertainment President Stephen McPherson said Sunday.

In the spoof that preceded the Nov. 15 football game, "Desperate Housewives" actress Nicollette Sheridan persuaded Owens to skip the game by dropping the towel wrapping around her and jumping into his arms.



Sheridan

## Hoffman stays put

Dustin Hoffman flew into London, where he denied reports that he planned to settle in Britain permanently.

Hoffman arrived with his wife, Lisa, Sunday to promote his new film, "Meet the Fockers," the sequel to 2000's "Meet the Parents," in which he stars alongside Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller and Barbra Streisand.

"I was doing some publicity for this movie in the States, and one of the things they asked was don't I have a place in London? ... That turned into: 'I'm moving to get away from [President] Bush,'" Hoffman said.

He added: "That's silly. You can't go anywhere in the world to get away from Bush."

## Best gift ever from Shaq

Shaquille O'Neal didn't have any trouble choosing a wedding gift for Donald Trump and Melania Knauss.

"Phantom Rolls-Royce, a white one," O'Neal said in Miami, referring to the massive luxury car that starts around \$325,000 in price.

"I'll be parked at my house when he wants to use it."

O'Neal said he and Trump have known each other for more than a decade.

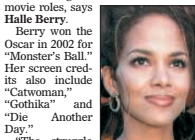
## Roles still hard to get

Winning the Oscar doesn't mean you're suddenly bombarded with offers for great movie roles, says Halle Berry.

Berry won the Oscar in 2002 for "Monster's Ball." Her screen credits also include "Catswoman," "Goathead" and "Die Another Day."

"The struggle for a woman of color to find good material is still very real, and it's a struggle I fight every day," the actress, 36, told reporters Sunday.

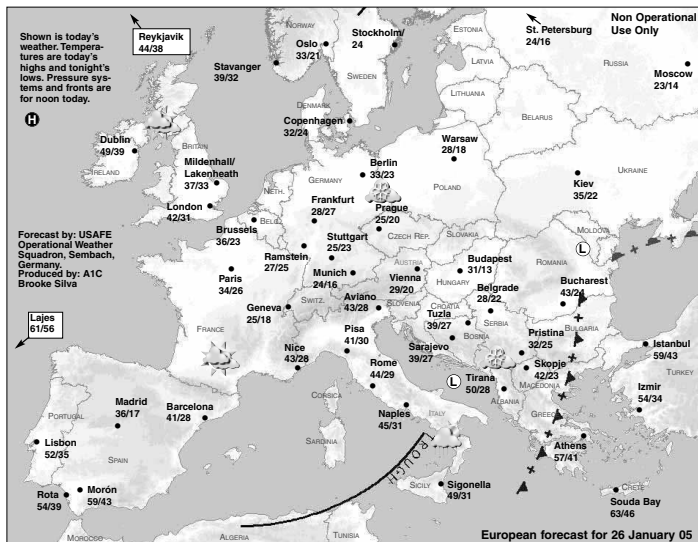
Stories and photos from wire services



Berry







## European forecast for 26 January 05

KEY: Sunny Pt. Cldy. Mostly cldy. Cloudy Showers T-storms Rain Rain/snow Snow

Cold frnt. Warm frnt. TROUGH Occluded fr. Staty. front

L H Low High

## AFRICA

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Cape Town	81	63	Mogadishu	87	74
Dakar	77	64	Nairobi	83	58
FreeTown	89	73	Rabat	58	33
Kinshasa	88	71	Tripoli	55	37

## THE WORLD

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Amsterdam	38	33	Manila	85	71
Bahrain	65	47	Mexico City	71	46
Beijing	41	23	Montreal	6	15
Beirut	68	54	Riyadh	63	46
Bermuda	64	52	Rio de Jan	82	74
Caracas	89	72	Seoul	41	20
Helsinki	26	15	Sofia	40	21
Hong Kong	71	62	Sydney	78	67
Lisbon	72	35	Tyran	18	35

## TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

[illegible]

## MIDEAST

## THE UNITED STATES TODAY

For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to the USAFE Operational Weather Squadron home page at:  
<https://ows.sembach.af.mil>  
<http://ows.public.sembach.af.mil>

## SUN & MOON

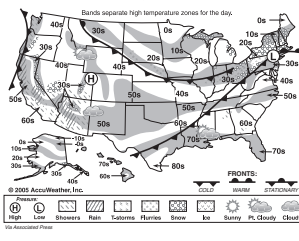
	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:03AM	7:02AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:07AM	8:06AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:29PM	5:30PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	5:10PM	5:12PM

			
Last qtr.	New moon.	First qtr.	Full moon.

## THE UNITED STATES TODAY

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time



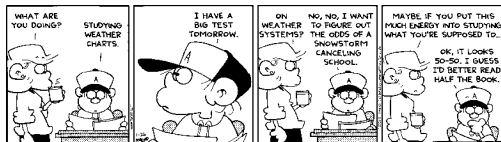
Via Associated Press

Scheduled to **ETS** or **PCS**?





Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



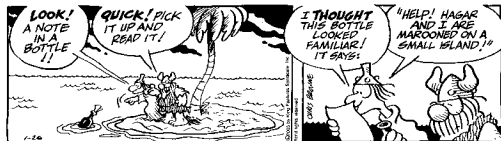
Blondie



Dilbert



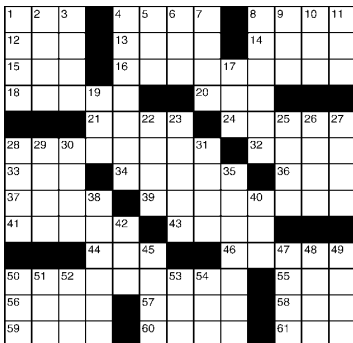
Hagar



Garfield



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



## Across

- 1 That guy
- 4 Prima donna
- 8 Aware of
- 12 Raw mineral
- 13 Bucks' mates
- 14 "OK"
- 15 Zero-star review
- 16 Trendy
- 18 Peer
- 20 Nevertheless
- 21 Applaud
- 24 Crowd
- 28 Guaranteed
- 32 Start over
- 33 Part of DJIA
- 34 Puts on the line
- 36 Self
- 37 Elevator name
- 39 Owing
- 41 By the book
- 43 Comet feature
- 44 Driver's license datum
- 46 Dracula's waking hours
- 50 Glenn Miller song
- 55 Scull tool
- 56 2000 movie, "Drowning —"
- 57 German car
- 58 Falsehood
- 59 Bohemian
- 60 Unscorted
- 61 Saute

## Down

- 1 Clinton's hometown
- 2 OPEC member
- 3 Carte
- 4 Taught by rote
- 5 Charged bit
- 6 Dr. Doolittle, e.g.
- 7 Wan
- 8 Pearl's home day?
- 9 Fresh
- 10 Mai —
- 11 Resistance unit
- 17 Silithery one
- 19 Excess expletive
- 22 Hillside shelter
- 23 Emulate
- 25 Swerve
- 26 Move gradually
- 27 Cross
- 28 "American —"
- 29 Memorandum
- 30 Brick: house :: —: nest
- 31 "— life!"
- 35 Big dance party
- 38 Glide
- 40 Actor Wallace
- 42 Gypsy Rose —
- 45 Grand opening
- 47 "A good walk spoiled," said Twain
- 48 "Aquarius" show
- 49 Deuce beater
- 50 "— Little Teapot"
- 51 Neither mate
- 52 Stick with a kick
- 53 Chic no more
- 54 Harem room

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



## I-26 CRYPTOQUIP

O Q B D F L F D Y Z K B T Y S  
U S L I B A R S J Y S N J R F  
N S F Y O S J A C R S J U S D T K C B Z  
K Y F T F K A T I K Y U Q ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MY ADVICE: DON'T HOLD LOOSE CHANGE AROUND VENDING MACHINES. THEY ARE COINIVOROUS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals T







# Syracuse rallies for 22th win

BY TOM CANAVAN  
The Associated Press

PISCATAWAY, N.J. — Jim Boeheim hardly had to say a word at halftime with his fourth-ranked Syracuse Orange trailing Rutgers by 18 points.

Gerry McNamara, Josh Pace, Hakim Warrick and Billy Edelin did most of the talking, and it wasn't pretty. Only effective.

Terrence Roberts converted a three-point play with 7.2 seconds left and the Orange (20-1, 7-0 Big East) barely survived a last-second, three-point shot by Quincy Douby in rallying for an 86-84 victory on Monday night, giving Boeheim his 69th win.

"We definitely challenged each other to turn the game around, and we knew we could go out and play our best basketball," Warrick said after Syracuse won its 13th in a row and became the first Division I team to win 20 games this season.

"Great teams are going to have to accept criticism, and we all dished it out to each other," added McNamara, who had 21 points. "That's what it's about. If you can still love each other and care about each other after you just screamed in each other's faces, that's what's going to make a great team."

Not only did the yelling work, so did the Orangemen's full-court press.

Syracuse forced four turnovers in less than 90 seconds in cutting the deficit to seven.

"I've been in comebacks, but not that fast," said Warrick, who scored five of his 21 points in the opening 43 seconds of the second half. "To be down 18, turn it around and actually go up six says a lot about this team."

The win gave Boeheim 20 victories for the 27th time in 29 seasons at his alma mater, moving him into the tie with Texas Tech's Bob Knight for second place among coaches with 20-win seasons.

Former North Carolina coach Dean Smith leads with 30.

"This was a great comeback," Boeheim said. "There is no doubt at halftime this was looking like a 25-point game the wrong way, and I would not have been surprised."

Ricky Shields had 20 points and 11 rebounds for Rutgers (7-9, 1-5), which just missed its biggest upset in losing for the sixth time in seven games. Its previous biggest win was against No. 6 West Virginia in February 1982.

The Scarlet Knights did everything right in the opening half, leading by as many as 20 and talking a 54-36 lead to the locker room.

"We were really happy at halftime," Douby said. "We were probably a little too happy, I'm not going to lie."

Syracuse didn't take the lead until Pace scored inside for a 70-68 lead, and the Orangemen increased the margin to 80-74 on a three-pointer by McNamara with just under six minutes to play.

# Sooners' paint job upsets Cowboys

BY JEFF LATZKE  
The Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Kevin Bookout and Taj Gray found a weakness up front against Oklahoma State, and exploited it again and again.

Bookout scored 23 points and Gray added 22 Monday night as the 13th-ranked Sooners dominated No. 9 Oklahoma State inside on its way to a 67-57 win.

"Pretty much, the goal tonight was to go out there and play tough," Gray said. "It was about rebounding, physical play and toughness."

The Sooners (16-2, 5-0 Big 12) gave back most of an early 17-point lead before taking over again in the second half and giving coach Kelvin Sampson his 250th win at Oklahoma.

"They're hard to handle," Sampson said.

Gray and Bookout scored the first 19 points for Oklahoma, and the big men were there with the game on the line, too.

After Oklahoma State (14-3, 4-2) pulled within 37-37, Bookout scored six points during a 10-0 run that put the Sooners back in control. In the middle of the spurt, Drew Lavender came down on a fastbreak, bounced the ball between his legs, and Gray flew in to jam the ball in with his right hand to put Oklahoma ahead 37-27 and get the crowd jumping.

The bookout dropped in a two-handed layup, Oklahoma's lead was 43-27. The advantage kept growing.

Gray converted a three-point play, Lavender hit a driving layup, and Jason Williams made a three-pointer from the left wing



Oklahoma forward Taj Gray points to the crowd Monday, Jan. 24, 2005, after scoring on a dunk in the first half against Oklahoma State.

to extend Oklahoma's lead to 51-31.

Joey Graham scored in the lane to start a 13-4 run that gave Oklahoma State some life, but Bookout converted a three-point play, and Williams drilled another three-pointer to put Oklahoma ahead 61-44 with less than 4 minutes to play.

"We knew they were going to come back. The key was to an-

swer," Sampson said. "When a team comes back on you, you better answer and you better not turn it over because turnovers lead to easy baskets."

Oklahoma had a season-long eight turnovers and had 21 assists on its 67 baskets.

"It's amazing what you can accomplish when nobody cares who gets the credit," Sampson said.

Ivan McFarlin finished with 16

points to lead Oklahoma State, and Graham scored 15. John Lucas III, who had been averaging 17.8 points per game, was held to 10 on 3-for-13 shooting. He scored seven points in the final 4½ minutes.

Oklahoma raced out of the gates and pounded the ball inside to Gray and Bookout, who masterfully ran the high-low and mixed in transition baskets, too.

By the time Gray finished off Lavender's alley-oop with a layup to make it 19-2, he already had 11 points and a pair of two-handed jams. Gray was 5-for-5 to start the game, and Bookout couldn't miss either.

"They went to their bread and butter," McFarlin said. "They really got to it right away, and we were kind of in a bind."

The Cowboys eventually figured out the plan and were able to keep the ball from Oklahoma's two big men. McFarlin cut the deficit to 27-18 with a fastbreak layup after Gray tried to force a pass inside to Bookout and it was stolen by a pair of Cowboys.

Oklahoma State beat Oklahoma to the glass early in the second half to cut into the Sooners' lead. Daniel Bobik's long offensive rebound led to a three-pointer by Lucas, and McFarlin's putback brought the Cowboys within six.

But Oklahoma had an answer — and it was more Bookout and Gray.

The tandem scored 11 of the next 13 points, and Oklahoma State was never within single digits again.

"They're both good inside players," Oklahoma State coach Eddie Sutton said. "They can't score from beyond 15 feet I don't think, but boy, you let them get inside, and they're tough."

# Down under boards, Bogut drills Air Force

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Once Andrew Bogut got the ball, Air Force had no chance to stop him.

Bogut scored 25 points on 11-for-12 shooting to lift No. 25 Utah to a 63-51 victory Monday night over the Falcons.

"After last year, I wanted to prove to myself I could score and board against these guys," said Bogut, who didn't play to his potential last season when Air Force swept the season series for the first time.

Utah (17-3, 5-0 Mountain West Conference) entered the Top 25 on Monday for the first time since being ranked for two weeks in 2002-03, and made sure this game would end differently.

The Utes took apart Air Force with quick passes and lobs to Bogut, a 7-foot sophomore from Australia, Bogut, who leads the nation in rebounding and double-doubles, also had nine rebounds.

"I was just throwing it up there to him. We went up and got the ball and then it was over for the defense," said Mark Jackson, who had 11 points and tied his career-high with 10 assists.

The Utes, playing under first-year coach Ray Givoletti, have won 12 straight since losing at Washington and Utah State.

The Utes shot a school-record 80 percent from the field (24-for-30) against the nation's No. 1 scoring defense. Utah's previous best shooting game was 73.7 percent against Air



Utah center Andrew Bogut, right, gets to the basket before Air Force guard Antoine Hood, left, can defend him during the first half.

Force in 1987.

"I've never been involved in a game where a team has shot 80 percent. I have to praise

our guys. They maintained their focus and discipline for 40 minutes," Givoletti said.

The game plan was simple: pass the ball to Bogut in the post and play tenacious defense against Air Force's back-cutting offense.

"Having Bogut down there, we just had to get him the ball. He was scoring and passing and we just fed off of that. We had a lot of great passes," said Bryant Markson, who added 11 points.

So close to perfection, Bogut regretted his one miss.

"I was there at the rim and I was going to dunk but the defense was there and I had to pull back and miss a layup," he said.

Nick Welch had 15 points for just the second time in eight games.

"Once Bogut got their rolling, there wasn't too much we could do. He's 7-foot, and once he gets it in the paint we're finished," Welch said.

Bogut scored seven points in a 14-2 run to start the second half that gave Utah a 46-32 lead after Air Force had closed within two points. The Utes, who outrebounded Air Force 23-13, maintained a double-digit lead the rest of the way.

The Falcons, who start only one player taller than 6-foot-6, double- and triple-teamed Bogut at every opportunity but still couldn't stop him.

"He obviously has a significant size advantage against us and to me, that's the reason he didn't let anything bother him," Air Force coach Chris Mooney said. "He's a fantastic."

# Agassi has no answer for No. 1 Federer

BY PAUL ALEXANDER  
The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — In a match-up worthy of a final, defending champion Roger Federer was graceful and at his relentless best in beating four-time winner Andre Agassi 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 on Tuesday to advance to the semifinals of the Australian Open.

The top-ranked Federer extended his winning streak to 26 matches with a dazzling array of stinging winners from the baseline, crisp volleys and 22 aces that often left the quick Agassi flat-footed and the sell-out crowd applauding.

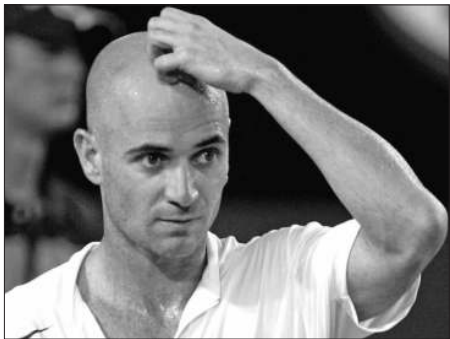
"He just outplayed me," Agassi said. "He was too good. I would suggest to his next opponent that he doesn't look to me for advice."

The 34-year-old Agassi, who came into the season-opening Grand Slam in perhaps the best shape of his life to be ready for matches like this, survived a record 51 aces in his fourth-round victory over Joachim Johansson by exploiting the few chances he got.

But one of the game's best counter-punchers never could find a real weakness to exploit against Federer's all-around game.

"I wanted tonight to be memorable. But it's one I'd probably prefer to forget," Agassi said. "I never got my teeth into it. And when I don't get my teeth into a match, I can look pretty ordinary."

With both players painting the lines and punishing ordinary shots, Federer broke



Andre Agassi was left scratching his head on Tuesday by defending Australian Open champion Roger Federer. Federer extended his winning streak to 26 matches in straight sets.

for a 4-2 lead in the first set when Agassi, trying to put a little extra on a second serve, double-faulted.

Then, as he did again and again while winning three Grand Slam events last year, Federer found an extra gear when he needed it.

The Swiss star saved four break points — two with aces — while serving for the

set in a game that went to deuce six times. A third ace gave Federer his third set point, and he turned a good service return from Agassi into a backhand winner down the line.

"I have no secrets," a smiling Federer said. "It's like roulette. I always pick the right numbers."

Federer then broke Agassi in the first

game of each of the next two sets and fended off the charismatic American's only other break point, in the fourth game of the second set, with a pair of service winners sandwiched around an ace.

With the crowd urging Agassi to extend the match, Federer finished it off with a serve that Agassi lunged for but could only dump into the net.

Asked how he made it look so easy, Federer said: "First of all, a good start always helps, especially against Andre. I really served well the whole match. He never broke me."

Federer next faces fourth-seeded Marat Safin, who he beat in last year's final. But while Safin was exhausted then after playing six grueling matches that took more than 18 hours, he's been on the court only 10½ hours through five matches so far, including 90 minutes Tuesday to beat No. 20 Dominik Hrbaty 6-2, 6-4, 6-2.

Safin also avoided the baking sun — his match was the first of the tournament played under a closed roof at Rod Laver Arena.

While the extremely fit Hrbaty wanted to play with the roof open, Safin was happy with the decision to close it.

"I saw that he really wanted to play with the heat," Safin said. "I think it's an advantage for him. The tournament director came in said they were going to close the roof. I said 'Yes!'"

"It was a great match for me — I played the best tennis I could," said Safin, who hit 33 winners.

The other semifinal match-up will be determined Wednesday when second-ranked Andy Roddick faces No. 26 Nikolay Pietrangolo and No. 3 Lleyton Hewitt meets No. 9 David Nalbandian.

## Things heat up for Williams-Sharapova rematch

BY PAUL ALEXANDER  
The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Maria Sharapova survived the heat. Serena Williams made sure she wasn't on the court long enough to let it affect her, then she let off some steam.

Playing under a broiling sun that fed tournament officials to close the roofs on the two show courts after their matches, fourth-seeded Sharapova and No. 7 Williams won Tuesday to set up a semifinal meeting at the Australian Open. It will be a rematch of last year's Wimbledon final, when the 17-year-old Sharapova won her first Grand Slam title.

Williams' toughest time came after she beat second-seeded Amelie Mauresmo 6-2, 6-2. She bristled when she was asked whether her and sister Venus' skills — they have combined for 10 of the 16 Grand Slams — are declining, and whether she needs to win this tournament to prove they aren't.

"I'm tired of not saying anything, but that's not fair," Williams snapped. "We've been practicing really hard. We've had some serious injuries."

Her voice catching, she also said the shooting death of another sister in September 2003 has been a distraction.

"We have a very, very, very, very close family," Williams said. "To be in some situation that we've been placed in the past little over a year, it's not easy to



Serena Williams, left, and Maria Sharapova, right, celebrate after overcoming the extreme heat and high-seeded opponents to advance to a semifinals match-up at the Australian Open.



AP photos

come out and just perform at your best when you realize there are so many things that are so important.

"We're not declining. I don't have to win this tournament to prove anything. I know that I'm one of the best players out here."

She certainly looked to be against Mauresmo, who claimed she was only at 50 percent after tweaking the thigh that she wrapped for every match to try to avoid a recurrence of a muscle strain.

Mauresmo, one of the fittest players on the women's tour, has

been plagued by injuries and withdrew from the Australian last year before her quarterfinal match with a back muscle strain. She recently added a physical therapist to her entourage to help keep her healthy.

Williams, who won the Australian championship in 2003 but didn't defend it last year because of a knee problem, took 71 minutes and hit 23 sizzling winners to beat Mauresmo, who clubbed 27 unforced errors.

"I feel great," said Williams, who was downcast Sunday after what she considered a bad perfor-

mance in her fourth-round victory.

"I played really well — I was just really focused."

Williams didn't win a major title in 2004, losing the Wimbledon final — as the two-time defending champion — to Sharapova.

"I think I was way too nervous at Wimbledon," Williams said. "I couldn't sleep, I couldn't breathe. Sometimes you want it too bad that you just freak yourself out."

She vowed to be more relaxed this time against Sharapova, who appeared on the verge of collapse

in beating U.S. Open winner Svetlana Kuznetsov 4-6, 6-2, 6-2.

The players took a 10-minute break between the second and third sets. During the changeovers, they put ice packs and wet towels on their necks. Each constantly took shelter between points in small patches of shade at the ends of the court.

Sharapova seemed to be struggling most, leaning on her racket and hanging her head. Kuznetsova often found herself waiting to serve while Sharapova slowly made her way to return.

Kuznetsova committed 53 unforced errors and failed to hold any of her last eight service games. She gave Sharapova a match point with a double-fault.

Sharapova whipped a running forehand crosscourt winner to close out the match in 2 hours, 17 minutes. She dropped her racket, backed into the shade and flung both arms in the air.

"I need a wheelchair right now," she said. "It was so hot. It was one of the toughest [matches] of my life."

Asked how much energy she had left, she said: "Just enough to win that match point, that's it."

Williams followed her on court. While her match was in progress, play on outside courts was suspended under the tournament's extreme heat policy.

Organizers won't allow matches to start after the temperature reaches 95 degrees, and other factors, including humidity and the temperature on court, reach set limits.





NASCAR chairman and CEO Brian France said Monday about the season-ending 10-race shootout for the points title, "We feel like we have a pretty good system. ... We did look hard at making any adjustments."

## NASCAR's 10-race chase back for '05

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR's points system will be unchanged from last year, when the debut of a 10-race shootout format resulted in the closest championship finish in series history.

"We feel like we have a pretty good system and we're set for '05," NASCAR chairman Brian France said Monday. "We did look hard at making any potential adjustments."

In 2004, France began his first year as head of NASCAR by overhauling the decades-old points system and creating a playoff structure for 10 drivers over the final 10 events of the Nextel Cup season.

Five drivers went into the November season finale with a chance to win the title. When the race ended at Homestead-Miami Speedway, only eight points separated champion Kurt Busch from runner-up Jimmie Johnson.

That, France said, was proof the system worked. The only time NASCAR had more drivers in contention was 1992, when six raced to the finale with a shot to win the title. Alan Kulwicki beat Bill Elliott by 10 points.

"You know, 2004 is undoubtedly going to go down as either the greatest season we've ever had, or one of the greatest seasons we've ever had," France said. "Did we make racing better? Was the racing on the track more exciting? Did we showcase the opportunities for the best drivers in the world to do their thing? And the answer is absolutely, and the Chase was a big part of that."

Again, the first 26 of the season's 36 races will be used to determine the participants for the 10-race championship finale. The top 10 in the standings following the race at Richmond in September — plus any driver within 400 points of first place — will have their points totals reset for the final 10 events.

In resisting the urge to tinker with the system, NASCAR will begin the season without any major changes for the first time in four years.

### Artest returns to practice

INDIANAPOLIS — Ron Artest practiced with the Indiana Pacers on Monday for the first time in over two months since he was sus-

pended for fighting with Detroit fans. Artest did not comment as he left the practice court at Conseco Fieldhouse, but teammates and coach Rick Carlisle said his presence gave the struggling Pacers a lift.

"Having a guy like Ron in practice helps raises the level of practice in terms of intensity because he's one of the real warrior-type players we have in this league," Carlisle said. "He came back in here today and it was like he never left."

Commissioner David Stern suspended the All-Star for the remainder of the season after he bolted into the stands at The Palace on Nov. 19 and exchanged punches with Pistons fans, who showered Artest and the rest of the Pacers with debris.

### Ghostzapper wins horse of the year over Smarty Jones

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Smarty Jones finished second again — even with a big head start.

Ghostzapper, who capped an unbeaten season with a stunning Breeders' Cup Classic victory, easily beat Smarty Jones to win Horse of the Year honors at Monday night's Eclipse Awards.

"It's a great honor," said Hall of Famer Bobby Frankel, who trains Ghostzapper. "It wouldn't have been a disgrace if we got beat. The other horse deserved it, too."

Smarty Jones won the Kentucky Derby and Preakness before his Triple Crown bid ended June 5 with a narrow loss to Birdstone in the Belmont Stakes.

That turned out to be his final race.

Meanwhile, Ghostzapper was a relatively unknown 4-year-old getting ready for his first race at the yearlings sale in July 4.

But by the end of October, Ghostzapper was clearly the top thoroughbred in the world.

Ghostzapper received 174 votes to Smarty Jones' 95 in balloting by turf writers and racing secretaries.

Ghostzapper won all four of his starts in 2004 and earned \$2.59 million. He won the 1 1/4-mile Classic in a record 1:59.

# Mets, Marlins, Orioles play the waiting game on Delgado

BY RONALD BLUM

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The New York Mets, Florida Marlins and Baltimore Orioles await Carlos Delgado's decision.

Delgado's agent, David Sloane, said Sunday that New York had withdrawn — a statement that puzzled the Mets, who said they were waiting to hear back about saying they needed to have a decision.

### Baseball roundup

On Monday, the sides started talking again. "I spoke to the Marlins, Mets and Orioles today regarding our respective proposals," Sloane said in an e-mail. "Carlos and I also talked about all three offers. There will be further discussion tomorrow with all the concerned parties."

Texas, which had offered a \$48 million, four-year contract, withdrew Sunday, with Delgado saying he wasn't prepared to be a designated hitter most of the time.

In Miami, free-agent outfielder Magglio Ordonez met with Detroit owner Mike Ilic and his top staff. Tigers President Dave Dombrowski and manager Alan Trammell also attended the meeting, as did agent Scott Boras and associate Mike Fine.

Ordonez, a four-time All-Star who turns 31 on Friday, hit .292 last season with nine homers and 37 RBIs in 202 at-bats for the Chicago White Sox. A career .307 hitter with 187 homers, he missed 36 games after injuring his left knee May 19, then went on the disabled list for good on July 22 with bone marrow edema.

"We've actually had a number of calls prior to this meeting," Boras said. "Their doctors have talked with Magglio's doctors. They're certainly comfortable he'll be ready to go by spring training."

Dombrowski and Trammell did not return telephone calls seeking comment.

Other players did make their picks Monday.

First baseman Tony Clark agreed to a \$750,000, one-year contract with his hometown Arizona Diamondbacks. Clark, 32, appeared in 106 games and started 64 for the 32-year-old ankle last season, hitting .221 with 16 home runs and 49 RBIs.

"From the time the Diamondbacks came into existence, I was already here hoping that an opportuni-

ty would come at some point," Clark said.

Rich Aurilia and the Reds agreed to a minor league contract that gives the 33-year-old former All-Star the chance to become Cincinnati's starting shortstop. He would get a \$600,000, one-year contract if he is added to the major league roster.

"I still think I offer a lot as an everyday player," Aurilia said. "I'm not thinking I'm going to be just a backup guy."

Ben Grieve agreed Monday to a minor league contract with the Pittsburgh Pirates, who will give the 1998 All-Rookie of the Year a shot to make their increasingly crowded outfield. He would get a \$500,000, one-year contract if the Pirates add him to their big league roster.

"He's got some experience, and we have quite a few young guys so he should be a big help," general manager Dave Littlefield said. "In the past he's been very productive, although not as much recently, and he gives us another alternative."

Japanese second baseman Tadahito Iguchi and the White Sox agreed on a two-year contract. Iguchi will get between \$2 million and \$2.5 million per season, and the White Sox will have an option for a third year. The agreement was reported by Kyodo in Japan and on Chicago's Web site.

An official announcement could come after Iguchi takes a physical. He would be the second White Sox player from Japan, joining reliever Shingo Takatsu, who was 6-4 with a 2.31 ERA and 19 saves in his first season a year ago.

Three players in salary arbitration settled, leaving 31 scheduled for hearings next month.

Right-hander Brad Penny, obtained by Los Angeles from Florida last summer, agreed to a \$5.1 million, one-year deal with the Dodgers. Penny was 1-2 with a 3.09 ERA in 11 1/3 innings for Los Angeles before he was sidelined Aug. 9 due to a nerve problem in his right arm.

"We believe Brad can be one of the top young pitchers in the National League," Dodgers General Manager Paul DePodesta said. "Dodger fans have only begun to see his ability."

Right-hander Jake Westbrook, who became an All-Star last year, agreed to a \$7.5 million, two-year contract, and Pittsburgh utilityman Ron Mackowiak agreed to a \$1.5 million, one-year deal.

# NHL labor talks set for this week

BY IRA PODELL

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The NHL and the players' association are taking another shot to save the lockout season, which has seemingly been on the brink of cancellation for weeks.

After a two-day meeting last week — initiated by Vancouver Canucks center Trevor Linden — that produced no tangible progress toward a labor agreement, the league invited the union back to the negotiating table on Monday.

The sides agreed as late as last Thursday that philosophical differences remain, yet the same small group of negotiators that met last week in Chicago and Toronto will get together Wednesday in Toronto.

"The league contacted our office to arrange for continued small-group discussions. We agreed to this request," players' association senior director Ted Sackin said Monday.

Just like last week, these talks will go on without NHL Commis-

sioner Gary Bettman or union chief Bob Goodenow.

Linden, the NHLPA president, Sackin and outside counsel John Cambridge will represent the players again in Toronto. NHL chief legal officer Bill Daly, Calgary Flames partner Harley Hotchkiss, and outside counsel Bob Battersman will take part for the league.

The sides had hoped to sit down in secret, but word of where and when the meeting would take place got out quickly — just like last week.

"We both believe that the process now will be better served by a less-public approach to the negotiation," Daly said in an e-mail statement.

The lockout reached its 131st day on Monday and was already facing the cancellation of 99 of 1,230 regular-season games, plus the All-Star Game.

No proposals have been made since early December, when the players offered a 20 percent raise back on all existing contracts as part of a luxury-tax and revenue-sharing system. The NHL

turned that down and made a counterproposal five days later that was rejected in a few hours.

The NHL might be set to make a new offer this week.

If the season is wiped out, the Stanley Cup wouldn't be awarded for the first time since 1919, when a flu epidemic canceled the final series between Seattle and Montreal. The NHL would then be forced to find major North American sports league to lose an entire season because of a labor dispute.

Optimism was expressed last Wednesday after the first day of meetings when Linden and Hotchkiss had a chance to talk one-on-one.

The good feeling didn't carry over to the next day, though, and Linden reportedly told players in a recorded session on the players' Web site that the NHL was still insisting on a salary cap and that the season would likely be canceled.

Daly said he was surprised that Linden came away from the meetings with that opinion because the NHL felt that some progress was made. Both sides said they were still far apart on the key issue.



# Bettis, Burress unsure of future in Pittsburgh

By ALAN ROBINSON  
The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Plaxico Burress seems convinced he has played his final game with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Jerome Bettis isn't so sure about his future.

Bettis, whose comeback following two disappointing seasons was a highlight of the Steelers' unexpectedly good season, addressing his teammates during an emotional meeting Monday that left Hines Ward in tears.

While Bettis insists he hasn't made up his mind to retire, Ward fears a 41-27 loss to New England in the AFC championship game on Sunday night was The Bus' final appearance for the Steelers.

The thought of the Steelers being without Bettis, especially after he fell one game short of the Super Bowl for the third time with Pittsburgh, left Ward visibly distraught.

"We put it all on the line," Ward said Monday, tears streaming down his face. "It's disappointing. I wanted to win more than anything for him. He deserves to be a champion."

Burress, the Steelers' top downfield threat, apparently doesn't think they will make a major effort to re-sign him. He also is disappointed with the limited number of throws that came his way Sunday, though he dropped a fade pass in the end zone that would have pulled Pittsburgh within 24-27 early in the fourth quarter.

"It's Pittsburgh, which speaks for itself. They're not going to change," Burress said. "I'm not going to change. Three or four balls just doesn't suit me very well."

By contrast, Bettis never criticized coach Bill Cowher's decision to start Duane Staley for the first half of the season.

That team-first attitude and Bettis' seven consecutive 100-yard games after Staley was hurt left a lasting impression on his teammates.

Bettis was in his best shape in years, not missing



Jerome Bettis gave an emotional speech to the Steelers Monday but stopped short of saying he'll retire.

any games due to injury-starting nearly 113 yards in eight starts, his workweek ability to cut also was visibly better than a season ago.

"I'm still in the middle of the road," said Bettis, who'll be 33 next month. "I need to get away from it and the loss and just take some time away."

Bettis said he talked to his teammates not to tell them goodbye, but because it might be the last time this group of Steelers would be together.

"I need to look at it and let my body tell me what to do," Bettis said. "If physically I can come back and be as productive as I was this year, then that's something that I would like to do. But if I can't, then I don't want to be out there and I don't want to take away from this football team."

The Steelers must restructure Bettis' contract again if he returns. Bettis is due to make \$4,484,000, with a cap value of \$5,484,000, in 2005.

Burress' departure after five seasons would take away quarterback Ben Roethlisberger's top deep threat and also require the Steelers to add another receiver via the draft or free agency.

Burress missed five of Pittsburgh's last six regular-season games with a sore hamstring, causing him to finish with 35 catches — 43 fewer than two seasons ago.

"Everybody keeps telling me what an important person I am on this football team, but you can't justify it for me right now," Burress said. "Just look at the whole season — it speaks for itself."

# Falcons don't expect another dropoff

By PAUL NEWBERRY  
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Now comes the hard part for the Atlanta Falcons.

Sure, they've had a few break-out seasons — the first division title in 1980, that Super Bowl appearance in 1999, a spot in the NFC championship game this year — but sustained success has always been elusive.

As the Falcons head into their fourth year, having come just one win short of the Super Bowl, they face an enormous historical burden. Amazingly, this franchise has never managed back-to-back winning seasons.

If form holds, Atlanta will go into the 2005 season with huge expectations, only to wind up as a major disappointment.

But first-year coach Jim Mora — actually, it's time to declare that he's not a rookie anymore — refuses to look back. He believes this team, with only three 30-something starters, is poised for long-term success.

"I'm not saying that the rest of the league because we're coming," Mora said Monday, less than 24 hours after the season ended with a 27-10 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles.

Indeed, the Falcons made huge strides this season. They won the NFC South with an 11-5 record. They scored a first-round bye in the playoffs. They routed the St. Louis Rams in the second round.

The ride stalled in Prozen Philly. The Eagles made Michael Vick look downright mediocre and moved on to face defending champion New England in the Super Bowl.

"It's mild emotions," Mora said. "On one hand, you're very proud of what you accomplished, because we did accomplish a lot. But on the other hand, you just can't accept not winning it."

There is a significant difference between the '98 team — which lost to Denver in the Super Bowl but slumped to 5-11 the following year — and this group.

The "Older Birds" relied heavily on older players such as Chris Chandler, Jessie Tuggle, Eugene Robinson, Cornelius Bennett, and Martin and Terrence Mathis. In fact, the leading tackler (Bennett) and top receiver (Martin) were cut soon after the season because of salary-cap concerns.

This team, led by the 24-year-old Vick at quarterback, is better positioned for growth. Running back Warrick Dunn (30), defensive end Brady Smith (31) and defensive tackle Ed Jasper (32) are the only regulars whose left's their 20s behind. The list of unrestricted free agents is a short one: offensive guard Robert Cozart, kicker Jay Feely, linebacker Matt Stewart, cornerback Kevin Mathis and return specialist Allen Rossum.

The Falcons have locked up most of their core players, doling out nearly \$80 million in guaranteed bonuses in the past 13 months to Vick, tight end Alge Crumpler, dominant defensive tackle Rod Coleman, emerging cornerback DeAngelo Hall, offensive guard Kyanan Forney and cornerback Jason Webster.

"We feel that we have the right people on the bus," Mora said. "Some guys will have to get off and we'll get some new guys on. But we feel like the bus is headed in the right direction. We're just not where we want to be yet."

Of course, it all starts with Vick. He finished the season with a thud — 11-for-24 passing, four sacks and a key interception against the Eagles — but was voted to the Pro Bowl for the second time and signed the richest contract in NFL history.

Vick is an unparalleled runner, gaining 902 yards and leading the NFL with a 7.5-yard average. On the other hand, there's plenty of work to be done in the West and in the defensive line. The team was installed by Mora and offensive coordinator Greg Knapp.

Mora expects the receivers to play a bigger role next season.

"It's something that will happen," he said. "For us to become the explosive, consistent type of offense ... that we want to be, that we will have to make strides in terms of getting the ball to the wideouts."

# Pennington as team rotator cuff

The Associated Press

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. — New York Jets quarterback Chad Pennington has a torn right rotator cuff, an injury he played through for the last six games of the season.

Pennington was hurt Nov. 7 against Buffalo when he was hit hard after a scramble. An initial MRI exam showed the tear, but the team announced Pennington had a strain. After sitting out three weeks, Pennington returned to play.

Team doctor Elliot Pellman revealed the extent of the injury Tuesday. Pellman said the team is hopeful Pennington will be ready for the start of training camp in July but made no promises.

He said Pennington came back because there was a minimal risk to damaging the shoulder further. But it appeared Pennington lost velocity on his passes once he did return, and coach Herman Edwards said the franchise quarterback was playing through pain.

A second MRI following their 20-17 overtime loss to Pittsburgh in the second round of the playoffs showed there was no additional damage.

Pennington will have surgery shortly after the Super Bowl on Feb. 6. Renowned specialist James Andrews will perform the surgery.

"We are optimistic Chad will do absolutely fine," Pellman said. "But as you know, there are black holes with any surgery. We're happy to wait and see."

The severity of the injury is disconcerting, because rotator cuff tears are uncommon for quarterbacks. Pitchers are the most likely athletes to sustain the injury, and many take up to a year to fully recover. But quarterbacks do not throw the ball as hard and have fewer motions, so the recovery time could take as few as six months.

## Ex-Dolphins coach Bates takes over Packers defense

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Jim Bates was hired Monday as defensive coordinator of the Green Bay Packers, marking the second time in two years the team has changed coordinators after losing in the playoffs.

Bates spent 4½ years as Miami's defensive coordinator before taking over as interim coach last year when Dave Wannstedt resigned at midseason. Bates led the Dolphins to a 3-4 record. The team was 1-8 when Wannstedt quit.

After the season, the Dolphins hired Nick Saban as head coach, and Saban decided to let Bates take over a unit that struggled with pass coverage and poor tackling last season. The Packers ranked 25th in the NFL in total defense and made only eight interceptions.

Green Bay still won the NFC North, but gave up four touchdowns to the Detroit Lions in a 30-20 win in a 31-17 wild-card playoff loss to the Minnesota Vikings at Lambeau Field.



Within days, team president Bob Harman stripped coach Mike Sherman of his duties as general manager and hired Ted Thompson to take over as GM. Bates replaces Bob Slowik, who was promoted to defensive coordinator after Ed Donatelli was fired a year ago following a playoff loss in Philadelphia.

Bates will have a new staff to work with in Green Bay. Defensive backs coach Kurt Schottenheimer took the same position with St. Louis, and defensive coordinator Jethro Franklin left the Packers to take a similar job at USC.

## K. Schottenheimer named Rams' secondary coach

ST. LOUIS — The St. Louis Rams hired Kurt Schottenheimer as secondary coach Monday.

Schottenheimer replaces Perry Fewell, who left the Rams to work for the Chicago Bears.

The younger brother of Chargers coach Marty Schottenheimer served as defensive backs coach for Green Bay last season. Before that, he worked as defensive coordinator for the Detroit Lions from 2002-03, the Washington Redskins in 2001 and the Kansas City Chiefs from 1999-2000.

He served as the Chiefs' defensive backs coach from 1995-98 and their special teams coach from 1989-94. His first NFL position was as special teams coach for the Cleveland Browns.

## Bucs hire Hackett as QB coach

TAMPA, Fla. — It didn't take Paul Hackett long to land another job.

Less than a week after resigning as New York Jets offensive coordinator, Hackett was hired Monday as quarterbacks coach for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

The move reunites Hackett with Jon Gruden, who spent one season as an assistant under his former mentor when Hackett was the head coach at the University of Pittsburgh in the early 1990s.

Hackett left the Jets last Wednesday, four days after a 20-17 overtime loss to Pittsburgh in the second round of the playoffs. He had been under mounting pressure and constant criticism because of his unimaginative play calling.

Gruden jumped at the opportunity to bring him to Tampa Bay as a replacement for John Shoop.

Hackett, an NFL assistant for 16 years, was with the Jets for four seasons. He and Gruden began discussions Thursday, and talks continued over the weekend.

Although the Jets made the playoffs in three of Hackett's four seasons in New York, he was always the target of criticism. The only game he coached in when the team struggled to score despite the NFL's leading rusher in Curtis Martin.

# NFL tries to cover itself from wagering

BY TIM DAHLBERG  
The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The AFC championship game was still in the third quarter, but the wise guys had seen enough. In small rooms inside glittering casinos on the Las Vegas Strip, they came up with the most anticipated — and most important — number of the NFL season.

## Commentary

You won't find it on NFL.com, because the league likes to pretend the number doesn't exist.

But by Monday morning, it was already the talk around office water coolers and inside truck stop diners across the nation.

Can New England win a second straight Super Bowl — make that three in four seasons — by beating the Philadelphia Eagles? Probably.

The real question is: Can the Patriots cover the 6½-point spread that oddsmakers put up Sunday night even before New England was done routing the Pittsburgh Steelers?

That's the question millions of Americans will be trying to answer in the next two weeks as the hype builds to a Super Bowl game climax on Feb. 6 in Jacksonville, Fla.

Will it come to Vegas with wads of cash, bet with the corner bookie, or punch a few keys to link up with an Internet betting site. They'll buy squares at bars, get in of-

fice pools and wager with the neighbor next door.

They'll make big bets, small bets, stupid bets and crazy bets. Some will bet their favorite team with their heart; others will bet the opening coin flip comes up tails.

By the time they're done, billions of dollars will have changed hands.

Like it or not, betting and pro football are joined at the hip.

The lines that came out of Las Vegas in the 40s and 50s helped make the league what it is today, and the amount of money wagered on pro football grows unabated every year.

In Nevada alone, there's likely to be nearly \$100 million bet in legal books on the Super Bowl. That number could reach \$1 billion on the fast-growing Internet betting sites, while hundreds of millions of dollars in other bets exchange hands privately.

"A lot of the popularity of the NFL is because of wagering on football," said Stuart Doyle, wagering director of BetWTVS.com, an Internet sports book. "You only need to read between the lines of the commentary on Monday Night Football or on ESPN to know that or check your morning newspaper."

The NFL has consistently tried to separate itself from betting, and forbids active players from being in sports books or working in casinos. Matt Hill, an NFL communications assistant, said he now was available Monday to elaborate on the league's posi-

tion on gambling.

The NFL, though, actually helps bettors by requiring teams to provide precise injury information each week — the same information bettors use to make picks and oddsmakers load into their computers to help set lines.

The league's sensitivities are understandable in a way, but they are rooted in a different era. They date back to the early 1960s, when Paul Hornung and Alex Karas were suspended for betting on games and associating with undesirable elements.

Times have changed, though, and so should the league. Some sort of gambling is legal in almost every state now, and the WNBA even has a team that plays in a Connecticut casino. Baseball is warming up to the thought of moving a team to Las Vegas, and gambling is now an accepted part of American culture.

The NFL doesn't need betting booths in stadiums, but it should understand that it no longer needs to hide from the point spreads.

The league could even use them as a promotional tool — on its broadcasts, on its Web site and programs sold at games. What kind of spread did Joe Namath over- come in Super Bowl III? You won't find that out from watching NFL films.

And fantasy football is openly discussed on NFL.com, the NFL Network and during just about every broadcast, but not too many fantasy football leaguers play just

for fun.

Every NFL game is so scrutinized on the field and in the sports books that even players who wanted to throw a game wouldn't be able to. What kind of money would it take for a quarterback earning \$10 million a year to put the fix in?

"The NFL should thank the Lord every day that Nevada has the regulatory agencies that are able to assure betting is legitimate on football," Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman said.

Forgive Goodman for sticking up for his town. He would like to see an NFL team in Las Vegas, but that's not likely to happen anytime soon. Just two years ago, the NFL refused to even allow a Super Bowl ad promoting Las Vegas as a place to visit.

At the same time, the league allowed advertisers to fork over \$2 million or so a shot to air erectile dysfunction drug commercials laced with sexual innuendo. It also thought it was fine to have talking frogs and cute dogs promote the virtues of drinking beer.

And so, while New England and Philadelphia have rabid fans who care deeply about their teams, there will be millions more watching Super Bowl wondering just this: Will the Patriots cover the spread?

And why did I bet the coin flip would be heads when I knew all along it would come up tails?

Tim Dahlberg is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at: tdahlberg@ap.org

## Here's picking the Patriots

DETROIT — I'm taking New England. What about you?

Hurry. Pick now. It's almost too late.

What's the rush, you ask? There's still 12 days until the Super Bowl. Please! That's the rush. The 12 days are a trap, pure poison to any thinking fan.

Already I can feel the Super Hype oozing out of radio speakers. "Already, The Patriots Will Win."

I can see the television talking heads turning "into" "con" and "con" into "pro."

Already, I can see newspaper ink thickening in evenhandedness: "Why The Eagles Will Win" and "Why The Patriots Will Win."

Pretty soon, up will be down and down will be up. Pretty soon, Donovan McNabb will be a more reliable quarterback than Tom Brady. Andy Reid will be a better coach than Bill Belichick. Pretty soon, Terrell Owens will go from hobbled to never hurt.

Pretty soon, everything you thought you knew will be everything you knew you thought. Pick now. I'm warning you. Once the hype seeps in, it's like driving in a blizzard. Can't see forest. Can't see trees.

I'm taking New England. By far at least a touchdown.

And I'm not wavering.

**Better team,  
better conference**

Now, I hope my friends in

Philly understand. This is not a quick pick because it's easy. It's a quick pick because from this point, it only gets harder.

For example, the closer you get to the Super Bowl, the more you'll hear how the Eagles "aren't just satisfied to be going, they want to win."

Well, of course. Who doesn't want to win?

But deep down, I'm guessing, they may indeed be satisfied to be going. Oh, they'll never admit it. They may not even realize it. But Sunday was likely the Eagles' Super Bowl. The monkey is off their backs. The Patriots? What does Sunday mean to them? Their years are measured now by Super Bowl rings. That's reason No. 1 the Pats get the nod.

Reason No. 2: Consider who they played. In the past two weeks, New England held the best offense in football (Indianapolis) to three points, then dropped 41 on the league's best defense (Pittsburgh).

That's beyond versatile, that's ridiculous.

The AFC was a better conference, and when the Patriots had to win in it, they did. They knocked off the Jets twice, Indy twice (including the playoffs), the Seattle and St. Louis from the NFC — all of which turned out to be playoff teams.

The NFC, which fed the Eagles, was a lousier conference this year, and the Eagles only beat two teams that were in the playoffs.

Beating Minnesota was no big deal. That team backed into the postseason anyhow. Atlanta, on Sunday, was tougher with Michael Vick, but still more smoke than substance: a good team, but not an Indy or Pittsburgh.

Keep that in mind, as the Super

Bowl grows closer and ESPN blares and all these good, solid arguments start getting blurry, blurry ...

### The Montana factor

Another reason to pick the Pats? They like the jugular. They have more taste for blood than a great white. Did you know when Pittsburgh blew that fourth-and-one with a fumble? The very next play, Brady went deep to Deion Branch for a 69-yard touchdown. That's how the Patriots work. You slip, they push you down. You overthrew a pass? They don't get a hand on it, they intercept it. Then and simple. They make you pay.

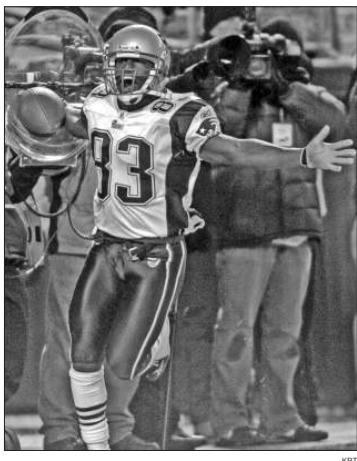
They also have, in Brady, this generation's Joe Montana. Montana also played for the Patriots coach on a great "team" with a great "system" and it wasn't until his numbers were undeniable — four Super Bowl victories — that people fully appreciated his skills. Brady has two championships and, like Montana, at least to date, he doesn't lose big ones.

McNabb is terrific. But everything's a learning curve. He just advanced on the NFC championship. He's still at the start of the Super Bowl invasion.

And don't tell me, with two weeks of preparation, the Philadelphia coaching staff will come up with a better plan than New England's.

In the end, it's simple. What you saw these past two Sundays from Belichick and his team was more impressive than what you saw from Reid and his. No knock on Philly. They're the NFC's best. But you have to pick one, so you choose the likely winner. And why do you do that now?

Because nothing changes be-



KRT

Receiver Deion Branch and the Patriots were most impressive in shutting down Indianapolis and dismantling Pittsburgh in the playoffs.

tween now and Super Bowl XXXIX. Momentum doesn't shift. Personnel doesn't shift. All that shifts is the thinking of the analysts, the pundits, the talk-show hosts and the fans, because, simply put, two weeks is too long to wait between games, and you have to fill the time with something.

So make your pick now, on what you saw Sunday, and hold with it.

Hold with it through 50 hours of pregame hype, through news

conferences and video clips and medical reports and declarations of "nobody gives us respect."

The best team Sunday night will be the best team two Sundays from now. I say that's New England. End of prediction.

And now, if you'll excuse me, I'll get my earplugs and my eye-shades and go hide under a rock until Feb. 6.

Mike Alborn is a columnist for the Detroit Free Press.

# Eagles: NFC title 'wasn't our Super Bowl'

## Philadelphia won't be satisfied with less than winning championship

By BARRY WILNER  
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The celebrations hardly were muted in Philadelphia. Fans stood atop snow banks on Broad Street, waving Eagles banners and hats. Cars honked their horns late into the evening. Toasts were raised to Donovan McNabb, Brian Dawkins, Andy Reid — even to Swamp the mascot.

For the first time in 24 years, the Eagles are NFC champions. It's not nearly enough.

"There were some tears of joy, definitely," All-Pro safety Dawkins said Monday, looking back at the locker room scene following Sunday's 27-10 victory over the Atlanta Falcons. After three straight title game flops, the Eagles were headed for the Super Bowl.

"It's something we worked for a long time and went through a lot of bad situations — 1-2-3 of losing — so that comes flowing out," Dawkins said. "After the tears have ceased, we're ready for the next step. This wasn't our Super Bowl. We didn't approach it like it was our Super Bowl."

And they won't approach the next two weeks as anything but business.

"We didn't do what we set out to do yet," Dawkins said. "I have a lot of confidence we'll win."

Beating the defending champion New England Patriots, winners of two of the last three NFL crowns, will take the very best the Eagles have to offer, but they won't bring their full complement offensively. Tight end Chad Lewis, who caught two touchdown passes against Atlanta, is out with a foot injury. Star star receiver Terrell Owens, their offensive spark plug, is uncertain because of an ankle injury that has kept him sidelined since Game 14.

What they will bring, the players swear, is the right attitude.

No way will they fall into the trap of premature satisfaction that hurt past Super Bowl teams



Philadelphia Eagles coach Andy Reid was a member of the Green Bay Packers' staff when they ended a long Super Bowl drought after the 1996 season — against the New England Patriots.

such as the 1998 Falcons, 1994 Chargers and 1985 Patriots. Those clubs were happy to be there, and they got routed by superior opponents.

New England might be the superior team this time — it's favored by seven points — but the Eagles promise they will give it their all. No awe at the surroundings and no worshipping at the Patriots' shrine.

"The ultimate goal is obviously the Super Bowl," McNabb said.

"Then we can come back and celebrate in a parade on Broad Street."

"We're excited about this win and the city having that confident feeling back. It's a great feeling to have the opportunity to move to the Super Bowl. When it comes

down to it, hey, it's one more game. Let's go win it."

The only other team with such a long gap between Super Bowl appearances was Green Bay. The Packers won the first two Super Bowls, then didn't return until January 1997, when they beat the Patriots.

Eagles coach Andy Reid was an assistant to Mike Holmgren with those Packers. He still has his notes from that postseason, but he hadn't looked at them again until Monday.

"It's a little different sitting there as head coach, but it still is a great feeling," said Reid, hired by the Eagles in 1999.

"Part of you is excited, another part of you understands you're not through. There's another

game against a great football team and you want to get yourself right in preparation for that team."

The Eagles lost 27-10 to the Raiders in their only Super Bowl trip. The Raiders broke a 19-year Super Bowl drought two seasons back, but they were routed by Tampa Bay in the big game.

McNabb was there. He's been to the last five Super Bowls, and he hasn't excitedly enjoyed them.

"It's frustrating, because every conversation is: 'I expected you guys to be here,'" McNabb said.

"Well I did, too."

"Now we can go down there and have all our people smiling and you're happy to're there. But playing the game is something different. It's keeping that business mind-set of going out and winning the game."

# Owens believes he'll play

By DAN GELSTON  
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Terrell Owens says his recovery is way ahead of schedule, surprising even his doctor.

Whether the All-Pro wide receiver will be healthy enough to play for the Philadelphia Eagles in the Super Bowl remains a mystery.

"What a lot of people don't realize is that I've been doing a lot of rehab on my own, a lot of healing on my own, but spiritually — God is

healing me and I'm way ahead of where a lot of people expect me to be, even the doctor," Owens said Monday. "He's even shocked at what he's seen. Spiritually I've been healed and I believe that I'll be out there that field Sunday, regardless of what anyone says."

Owens was among several Eagles, including quarterback Donovan McNabb and running back Brian Westbrook, who sat court-side for Monday's NBA game between the Philadelphia 76ers and Miami Heat. Owens, sidelined with an ankle injury since Dec. 19, was all smiles while talking about a possible return for the Feb. 6 Super Bowl against the New England Patriots.

Owens' Philadelphia coach Andy Reid said earlier in the day that Owens has made great progress, and will try to run this week.

"I've been doing all my rehab in the pool," Owens said.

He was back on the sideline Sunday for the NFC title game, only this time he served as head cheerleader, flapping his arms, waving a towel and encouraging the crowd to make more noise. The Eagles advanced to the Super Bowl with a 27-10 victory over the Atlanta Falcons.

Owens jogged onto the field and pumped up the crowd during pregame introductions, and jumped around on the bench during the game.

"I enjoyed it," Owens said. "If I could have been out there, I would have been out there. I just showed my support where I can."

But knee cuts and talking ribs are another story.

Owens, who led the Eagles with 77 catches for 1,200 yards and 14 TDs, tore two ankle ligaments and broke his right leg in a game against Dallas. A surgeon inserted two screws in Owens' ankle and a plate on the outside of the ankle three days after he was injured.

Owens was told after surgery that he had only an outside chance of returning for the Super Bowl, which was seven weeks away at the time. But he has rebounded vigorously and has told teammates he's going to play.

# Peak: Brady's playoff career got of to fabled start

PEAK, FROM BACK PAGE

"He has happy feet," Harrison said of Roethlisberger after the game.

It's a rookie. Sometimes he throws the ball up for grabs. He got three and we could have had a few more. That's just being a rookie."

Keep in mind that Brady was practically a rookie himself when his streak began.

Sunday's victory broke the record set a decade ago by Troy Aikman for playoff victories by a quarterback at the start of a career.

But Aikman was 0-11 as a rookie in 1989 and didn't get his first postseason win until after the 1991 season, winning a wild-card

game against the Bears in Chicago before losing at the Detroit Lions. The next year, the Cowboys won the first of their three Super Bowls in four seasons — a record the Patriots are now on course to tie.

Brady's first playoff game was one of the most fabled in recent history — the "tuck rule" contest in the snow of Foxboro in January 2002. Brady's apparent fumble seemed to end the Patriots' drive for the tying field goal, but it was overruled by replay when he was said to be tucking the ball away and New England went on to beat Oakland 16-13 in overtime.

The next week, Brady started the AFC championship game in Pittsburgh, injured his ribs in the first half, and was replaced by

Bledsoe, who threw for New England's only offensive touchdown in a 24-17 victory. But Brady was back in time to win the MVP award in the Super Bowl and Bledsoe was traded to Buffalo the next season.

Brady had been a sixth-round draft pick in 2000 after starting only one year at Michigan, where he beat out Drew Henson for the job. As a rookie, he started as a fourth stringer, threw three passes and completed one for six yards.

Though he didn't go unbeaten, he was as good in 2001 as Roethlisberger was this year.

"It was my second year but my first year as a player," Brady recalled last week. "My rookie year there's no way I could have done what he did. I was awful. I couldn't do anything."

He can do it now.

Perhaps the best demonstration came on the second-quarter touchdown pass to David Givens that gave the Patriots a 17-3 lead Sunday.

On a second-and-5 from the Steelers' 9-yard-line, Givens was flanked out wide right and had started in motion to the left when Brady put up his hand to stop him because he noticed that only cornerback Willie Williams was out there. He flipped the ball out to Givens. Williams fell and it was an easy touchdown.

Would Roethlisberger have noticed that coverage and made the quick decision? Maybe, but probably not.

A rookie, no matter how successful, is still a rookie.

Tom Brady is not.

## SPORTS

Eagles WR Owens believes  
injured ankle will be healed  
in time for Super Bowl, Page 31



Patriots  
QB  
Tom  
Brady

AP

# Pats' peak performer

## Roethlisberger's struggles only accentuate Brady's impressive postseason résumé

BY DAVE GOLDBERG  
The Associated Press

**A**s Tom Brady prepares for his third Super Bowl and Ben Roethlisberger heads home, Big Ben's playoff struggles only accentuate how remarkable Brady's 8-0 postseason record is.

Brady took over in 2001 for the injured Drew Bledsoe in the second regular-season game after throwing just three passes as a rookie. Four months later, he was the Super Bowl MVP.

And he still hasn't lost a playoff game.

"Yeah, sometimes I'm a little surprised by how fast it's happened," he said after throwing two touchdown passes in the Patriots' 41-27 victory over Pittsburgh in Sunday's AFC championship game. "But I've had so many good people around me to help me. It's a team effort, not my effort."

OK, so Brady's right: It's almost a cliché now that the Patriots are the ultimate team, and that's why New England is a 7-point favorite over Philadelphia as it seeks to win its third Super Bowl in four seasons on Feb. 6 in Jacksonville.

But Brady — every season more like his boyhood idol Joe Montana — is a remarkable athlete himself. To find out just how remarkable, one need only look as far as Roethlisberger's playoff troubles.

Big Ben had the best rookie season ever by a quarterback, with 14 straight wins, eight more than the next best. But he hit the wall in the playoffs — as rookies at every position often do.

He threw two interceptions against the Jets. One was returned for a touchdown; the other came late in the game and could have knocked the Steelers out of the playoffs had Jets kicker Doug Brien not missed from 43 yards.

Against the Patriots, Roethlisberger's first pass was tipped by Asante Samuel and intercepted by Eugene Wilson to set up Adam Vinatieri's field goal that got New England off to a 3-0 lead.

Just before the half, with Pittsburgh trailing 17-3, he got suckered by Rodney Harrison, an 11-year veteran, who intercepted the ball and returned it 87 yards for a score that made it 24-3 at the half.

That put Steelers in catchup mode, something a rookie quarterback just can't do against a team like New England. Montana maybe. Maybe Brady or Peyton Manning or Daunte Culpepper. But not Roethlisberger, whose success was in large part due to a strong supporting cast — the very thing Brady credits for his own achievement.

Wilson ended up getting a second interception later and Samuel dropped a couple he might have had.

SEE PEAK ON PAGE 31

Iverson scores 45  
as 76ers defeat  
East-leading Heat;  
West leaders  
Spurs taken down  
by Trail Blazers

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No. 13 Oklahoma  
pulls off inside job  
to top rival No. 9  
Oklahoma State;  
Syracuse is first  
in Division I  
to 20 victories

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Australian Open:  
Defending champ  
Federer makes  
quick work  
of Agassi; Serena,  
Sharapova  
to meet in semis

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